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The Week

THE conflict between China and Japan over Manchuria grows steadily more serious. The Chinese revolutionists are seeking to win over General Chang Hsueh-liang, who has succeeded Chang Tso-lin as overlord of Manchuria. They know they have no chance in a war with Japan, but they wish to strengthen their influence in Manchuria in every possible way, pending an appeal to the public opinion of the world, or perhaps to the League of Nations. They have not forgotten that such an appeal caused Japan to relinquish the Shantung peninsula in 1922. In this case, however, Japan's position is quite different. Food and raw materials from Manchuria are essential to the maintenance of her crowded population; and, whether wisely or not, she feels that her military strategy demands control of the province. Baron Tanaka more than a year ago announced his country's "special interest" in Manchuria; and before and since then, Japan has acted as though she had annexed the territory. The excuse she now gives for objecting to the spread of Nationalist influence north of the Great Wall is that the Chinese government is still insecure, and has "a Red tinge." The first of these charges is no business of Japan's, and there is every reason to believe that the second is false. But if the Chinese government were like Gibraltar, and as conservative as Poincaré, Japan would still fight to keep Manchuria.

THE pistol wound inflicted by a political enemy seven weeks ago on Stefan Radich has at last proved fatal, and, in consequence, the future of Jugoslavia, and even of the Balkans in general, is thrown into uncertainty. Radich was the leader of the Croatian Peasant party, and since the death of his enemy Pashich was unquestionably the strongest man in the country. The Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes has never been wholly satisfactory to any of these three groups. Outside pressure, and notably the threat of aggression by Italy, has been the chief factor in holding Jugoslavia together. Radich was a force for dissension and not for harmony; but his death will provide the temporarily muddied waters in which European rulers love to fish. It will be worth while to watch the news from the Balkans for the next few weeks.

MR. HOOVER'S acceptance speech repeats his opinion that prohibition is "a noble experiment" and says it must be enforced or the Amendment repealed. Is there any reality to such a statement? If the Amendment can legally be repealed—a matter as to which there is some doubt—it must be by a vote of three-fourths of the states. In other words, any thirteen of them could indefinitely prevent such action. There are thirty-three states which had gone dry by local action prior to 1920, when the Eighteenth Amendment went into effect. There are twenty which have written such provisions into their state constitutions. Among these, thirteen can be found which have given no indication that they would vote wet at any time in the near future. Their combined population in 1927 was only 8,966,000, or 7 percent of the country's total—a figure which can be

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compared with the 55,642,000 persons in the fifteen states which had not gone dry before 1920, most of which have given strong evidence that they are still wet in sentiment and in practice. The drys need only to keep 4,500,000 persons of their faith, or 3.5 percent of the population, scattered among these thirteen states in strategic proportions, to make repeal impossible, no matter how the other 113,500,000 of us feel about it. The practicable alternatives are not those which Mr. Hoover, for political purposes, sets forth. They are: nullification, with or without legal support—or enforcement of a strictness and costliness such as have never yet been contemplated.

A POINT about the campaign which is worth considering is the fact that if Governor Smith should win, he would be almost certain to have a majority with him in the Senate, and be likely to have one in the House. In the present Senate there are forty-eight Republicans, forty-seven Democrats and one Farmer-Laborite, and the states in which successors to Republican Senators must be elected this year include California, Connecticut, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Vermont and Wisconsin. It may be taken for granted that a Smith victory in any state which is electing a successor to a Democratic Senator would result in bringing another Democrat into the upper house. But to be victorious, he must also win some of the nominally Republican states in the above list, and the senatorial results would be influenced in the same way. The same reasoning holds good in the case of the House. At present, the Republicans have a majority of thirty-nine, out of the membership of 435. If Smith is to win, he must carry several states which at present have heavy Republican representation. Massachusetts, for example, has twenty-six Republican Congressmen, Connecticut has five, New York eighteen, New Jersey nine, Illinois eighteen, Missouri four. A change of only twenty seats would destroy the Republican majority, and the states listed now have eighty Republicans in the House, many of whom would certainly lose their places in such a *débâcle* as would result in the state's going for Smith.

THE Public Service Commission of New York has approved of the Consolidated Gas merger without investigating on its own account the implications of the merger in the total power situation, its possible effect on the problem of St. Lawrence power, its possible economies or its probable bearing on rates. If this action had been taken without any warning to the Commission that such investigation ought to be made, we should have said merely that it demonstrated their stupidity and incompetence in protecting the public interest. But it occurred after a determined attempt of the Public Committee on Power to intervene, for the purpose of raising these questions, had been blocked by the Commission, in spite of a request from Governor Smith. It occurred after the city itself had raised some of these questions. The impression left by the affair is that the power companies and the Commission saw a necessity for haste in consummating the merger, before too much investigation could be made. We hope, nevertheless, that the necessary investigation will go on elsewhere, and that its results will be made available to the public.

DR. JOHN ROACH STRATON, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in New York City, recently preached from that pulpit a sermon in which he called Governor Smith "the deadliest foe of moral progress and true political wisdom." The Governor promptly denied the truth of this charge and challenged Dr. Straton to debate the question in the church where the accusation was made. Dr. Straton at first consented to do this, with a proviso that the debate be repeated in St. Patrick's Cathedral; but after some days, he explained that he had been "only joking" and that Governor Smith will not be permitted to appear in the church under any circumstances. He is willing, however, to participate in a debate held in the circus environment of Madison Square Garden. It is our guess that Dr. Straton is afraid of Governor Smith and is doing his best to avoid the debate. If so, we hope the Governor will be able to force a meeting. Dr. Straton's ideas are in general precisely those of the Ku Klux Klan. Throughout the campaign they will be whispered, but rarely will anyone sponsor them publicly. The Governor is entitled to answer them formally and openly; probably few votes will be changed by what he says, but at least the whisperers will be driven underground.

IN SPITE of its many and stubborn obstacles, one is often tempted to think that the American labor movement is its own worst enemy. Almost every progressive and energetic force in that movement, or associated with it, has helped at one time or another to create in Brookwood a much needed resident labor college. Brookwood is in a fair way to become something of which labor might boast. But suddenly and without warning we read that the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor, on the basis of a report by Mr. Matthew Woll, has advised bodies affiliated with the Federation to withdraw their support from Brookwood, on the ground that doctrines antagonistic to A. F. of L. policy as well as anti-religious doctrines are being taught there, and that pro-Soviet demonstrations have occurred there. This report is not made public. The Directors of Brookwood deny the charges and state that they were aware of no investigation, and had had no opportunity to reply to any accusations. Surely this is an exceedingly frivolous way for a dignified body like the A. F. of L. to

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act. The charges, on their face, appear to be those of narrow-minded and vain individuals who have no conception of the nature of education. They imply, too, that the labor movement is a religious partisan—something that Samuel Gompers would have repudiated with his whole soul. We hope that the hasty action of the Council will promptly be reconsidered.

WE might have known that it was coming. Our Western states are accustomed to the "groceteria," and other forms of self-service shops; and now, in Louisville, Kentucky, this idea has been applied so that the housewife may do her marketing in an automobile and never leave the car. In the "auto-market," her car runs along grooved slots in the floor of a large building, under its own power, but not needing to be steered. On either side are shelves from which she makes her selection, snatching as she passes, like those who try to catch brass rings from the merry-go-round. When she has gone the length of the building, the slots switch her car into another alley and she returns to the street, paying for what she has taken when she passes the cashier. This development has, of course, been forced by the difficulty of finding parking space in the business district. It would only be possible in America, where women who drive their own cars keep house without servants and do the family marketing. It would only be possible, too, in a civilization where the status of the pedestrian is less than the worm's, and no one must walk, even a few feet, if he can possibly ride.

THE state of Minnesota has struck a body blow at the freedom of the press by passing a law which permits the courts to enjoin future issues of any periodical if, in the judge's opinion, it is "malicious, scandalous and defamatory." The motive, no doubt, was to do away with blackmailing sheets, with which many of our cities are afflicted at present; but the form of the law is such as would permit any judge to silence an editor with whom he disagreed for whatever reason. The new law is to be reviewed by the United States Supreme Court; it will be interesting to see what view is taken of it by that body.

Herbert Hoover's Great Illusion

MR. HERBERT HOOVER'S speech accepting the nomination of the Republican party for the presidency is not a distinguished or an important expression of political conviction. On the surface it is little more than an awkward, confused procession of Republican commonplaces. It is not easy for Mr. Hoover to find an individual and appropriate verbal equivalent for his living feelings and ideas. He is a plain, shy, moody, sensitive man of action. Effective public speaking implies the playing of a part, and this he cannot do. He has to place himself under artificial pressure whenever he expresses for the benefit of his fellow countrymen his patriotic aspirations. There is no rhythm to his public utterances, not even the dry, mechanical, unleavened rhythm from which we have suffered for so many years in the official utterances of Mr. Coolidge. On the strength of Mr. Hoover's speech of acceptance, it would be possible to accuse him of being in his attitude toward public affairs a mere imitator of his former chief, and this accusation, considering Mr. Coolidge's own lack of originality, would, if sustained, deprive his political figure of all dignity and momentum. Certainly Mr. Hoover's economic and political doctrine appears to endorse without any uneasiness of conscience all of the President's most dreary Coolidgisms. It flourishes the same misleading claims. It overflows in the same equivocal and meaningless generalities. It evades in the same way the sharp edge of the actual conflicts which these generalities encounter when they come into collision with offensive facts. In spite of Mr. Hoover's semi-scientific training, there is no indication in his speech of an exacting intellectual conscience or any instinct for luminous self-criticism. He is apparently as much of a special pleader for conventional Republicanism as Senator Moses, but without Senator Moses' saving cynicism.

The preceding estimate of Mr. Hoover's speech of acceptance would, however, if it were left alone, convey a wholly false report both of the speech and of the quality of his mind. Conventional as it is in intellectual substance and jerky and tense as it is in form, it is in the quality of its feeling almost pathetically sincere. Mr. Hoover's formulation of public policy does not apparently differ from that of Mr. Coolidge, but he none the less means something different by what he says. Mr. Coolidge is not, of course, an insincere man, but he is in his own way a political actor. In spite of his reputation for reticence his mind is essentially rhetorical. In giving expression to some precious political commonplace he mounts his personal Pegasus and rides through the sky toward the glory of the setting sun. He does not have to bother about the subsequent fate of his flaming message. As an authentic interpretation of American institutions it is from his point of view the everlasting Word, and it will inexorably realize itself. But Mr. Hoover's mind is not rhetorical. He has been engaged in getting things accomplished, and when he comes to express himself in words he is not fluent and confident, but laborious and full of effort. He does not, like his chief, unconsciously confuse doing something with saying something. From Mr. Coolidge's point of view, America is a finished Utopia, which, like one of Mr. Ziegfeld's show girls, requires only to be exposed in order to be glorified. From Mr. Hoover's point of view, America is also a Utopia,

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but a Utopia still in the making. He is at least as much interested in what he can do to make it better as in its existing perfections. Throughout the whole of his speech he appeals for the vindication of his Utopia to results which in fact have still to be achieved; and he appeals for support on the ground that he is the man to achieve them.

Mr. Hoover, consequently, displays in his speech the conscience, if not of a liberated political thinker, at least of a good professional engineer. Engineers are essentially innovators who are making the world over according to preconceived and accepted patterns and ideas. They take for granted the validity of the prevailing system of human needs, and the authenticity of existing political institutions and moral values. It is their business to build railways and to harness water power, secure in the conviction that the railways will transport socially desirable goods under socially desirable conditions, and that the increased volume of electric power will enable more people to satisfy their legitimate needs more economically. They are accustomed to ruthless skepticism, and if necessary, free experimentation in designing the technical means whereby it is proposed to harness a particular water power, but they are also accustomed to be wholly credulous about the economic and social order which the mobilized water power will actually serve. Mr. Hoover is in this sense a typical engineer in politics. He takes for granted, just as Calvin Coolidge and Alfred Smith do, without examination and without inquiry, the traditional plan, organization and ideal outlook of American economic and social life. He considers it his business to examine the working of the mechanism and to propose and execute desirable improvement therein. It is not a very lofty and far-reaching aim, but it is different from that of his chief, and it is better. Mr. Coolidge is so intoxicated by his own patriotic verbosity that he has not felt impelled to do anything to redeem his vision except to speak his winged words, to propose economies and to veto legislation. But Mr. Hoover means by progress not only something which has already taken place and been confirmed, but something which has still to take place and may be defeated. The contribution which he proposes as President consequently is not negative, but positive. Mr. Coolidge could never have uttered the words with which Mr. Hoover's speech almost concludes. "The awakening of the national conscience and the stimulation of every remedial agency are functions of the national government. I want to see our government great both as an instrument and symbol of the nation's greatness."

From Mr. Hoover's point of view, however, the prevailing American scheme of salvation which he takes for granted is itself superlatively lofty and uplifting. We infer from reading between the lines of Mr. Hoover's more important utterances that his experience in public life during and immediately after the War revived and intensified his Americanism as a matter of feeling and clarified it as a matter of conviction. Before the War he was interested primarily in his work as an engineer. His engagements so frequently took him abroad that presumably he was not, during those years, particularly ardent and explicit in his Americanism. But his experience both as the administrator of Belgian relief and as the official food distributor for the people of a belligerent United States tended to make him more anti-European than formerly and more consciously and more articulately American. He came to accept more aggressively the conventional American opinion that America was a haven of refuge from European animosities, complications and handicaps. The traditional patriotic interpretation of America as a land of generous promise which was supposed to bring about a complete reconciliation between the individual and society underwent in his mind a new birth. The rough Communist explosion in Russia and the inept Socialist experiments during and after the War reënforced his prepossession in favor of America as the land of individual opportunity and achievement, which also contained the seed of the consummate society. It was a combination between these aggressively American pioneer convictions and his training as an engineer which has determined his subsequent political philosophy and his personal mission. He was well aware that American business was not either efficient or socially responsible enough to vindicate the pretensions which its apologists uttered on its behalf. But realizing as he did that the vindication of these traditional pretensions depended upon the socializing of American business, he decided that it was necessary to work toward this end through rather than against the business man. He selected as his own special task the consistent effort to make American business men conscious of their professional and public responsibilities.

The different aspects in his philosophy and in his conception of his personal mission are contradictory in a way of which he himself is not sufficiently aware. There is much to be said in favor of his effort to vindicate the social objects of American democracy by working so far as possible with the business man rather than merely in opposition to him. Assuredly some such policy must be successfully tried if America is to move in the direction of its implicit social democratic purpose without plunging for a while into the dangerous and treacherous gulf of a revolutionary convulsion. But in order to awaken American business to a livelier sense of its public responsibilities and opportunities, it requires less to be patted on the back and flattered than to be challenged and shocked into some kind of consciousness of its anti-social dangerous courses. As a matter of fact, business men conduct their operations under the influence of a strong compulsion to shut their eyes to their shortcomings. It is extremely doubtful at present whether they can be persuaded to mend their ways without, as a result

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of their irresponsibility and blindness, involving the future of the American people in some sort of social catastrophe. Probably the best chance of avoiding a catastrophe is to have the government treat them with a combination of alert confidence and friendly correction. Mr. Hoover trusts too much to confidence alone. His philosophy is more discerning and realistic than Mr. Coolidge's, but he expects more than he should from the operation of automatic, and consequently unconscious, economic forces. He does not allow sufficiently for arousing the operators of the economic machine to the need of improvements by calling attention to maladjustments rather than by trying to smear them with additional lubrication.

"Our purpose is," says Mr. Hoover, "to build in this nation a human society, not an economic system." Yet throughout the whole of his address the materials out of which he proposes to build a human society are the selfish economic motives of individuals and the satisfaction of their cravings for possessions and power plus a smoke screen of pious discourse about the beauty of public spirit and constructive service. It is the old story of the silk purse and the sow's ear. The business men upon whom he counts for the realization of his Utopia are the creatures of the economic system rather than its master. They cannot become its master without entering into a much more generous partnership with the wage-earner and with the expert than they are now willing to accept. At present they yield only as much power as they have to yield. As a matter of fact they have had to yield a good deal, but they should and will have to yield much more as soon as the wage-earner and the expert realize their own situation and their actual needs. They are in effect the partners of their employers and are entitled to the powers and privileges of partnership. It is only after they assert themselves and claim a larger share in the responsible operation of the economic machine that America will become less of an economic system and more of a human society. It is only then that business men will themselves become socialized.

Mr. Hoover's great illusion is that the economic mechanism which he wishes to improve chiefly by better lubrication actually makes for a high quality of individual life. As a matter of fact, its social product is second-rate and precarious precisely because its products as individuals are cheap, monotonous and distracted. The stimulation of individual economic initiative, the boasted equality of economic opportunities, and the project of building better individuals and a better society by the cultivation and the satisfaction of the cravings of individuals for power and goods gave birth to cheap and monotonous human beings even during the pioneer years of the American economic system, when the land was free and the opportunities for aggrandizement for a man without capital were abundant and accessible. But today, when the most available economic opportunity for the majority of American city residents consists in becoming the irresponsible, mercurial and dependent employee of a big business, the product in individuals of the economic machine is not the conscious and self-respecting member of a society but merely one creature in a crowd. The American economic system is not operated by growing conscious individuals nor does it breed or need individuality. What it does breed and need are human atoms who dance to the tunes of the mob. Mr. Hoover's individualism is merely an attempt to substitute a class individualist propaganda for the realities of individual vitality and growth.

Hoover, the Economist

HERBERT HOOVER'S reputation is founded chiefly on four pillars—it consists in a belief that he is a great humanitarian, a great administrator, a great engineer, and a great economist. We use the word "economist" not in the narrow technical sense of academic theoretician, but in its older and grander connotation of "political economy." A great political economist would be a man who knows what to do, in laying down policies for the community and the State, in order to render its members and its citizens materially more prosperous. In a sense, his claim to this title is more important as a qualification to the presidency than any of the other three. In a sense, it sums them up, and adds to them an ability without which they would be irrelevant to the role which Mr. Hoover is expected to assume. As a humanitarian, he would be ineffectual without knowing how to administer agencies of relief and improvement. As an administrator, he would not be so valuable without a comprehension of engineering technique, which underlies so much of the modern world. And as an engineer, he might not be very useful as the political leader of the whole nation unless he understood and could deal with those problems which concern, not merely the advancement of individual projects, but the economic interrelations of society.

What does the Hoover acceptance speech tell us about Hoover the economist? It is clear at once that he is conscious of economic data, and concerned with economic problems. Nor is he backward in announcing the criteria which are to be applied to claims of success in dealing with them. He wants every man and woman to find the United States a better place to live in—and in this connection he mentions home and job, as well as such intangibles as life, hope and happiness. And he bravely asserts that "we shall use words to convey our meaning, not to hide it."

First to be subjected to this acid test is the record of the Harding-Coolidge administration, which Mr. Hoover plainly believes one difficult to better. Then come the old catchwords. "Economy" has

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reduced federal expenses two billions per annum. The foreign debts have been "settled." Taxes have been reduced "in the particular interest of the small taxpayer." Exports have greatly increased. Production of goods has grown more than 25 per cent, and the national income likewise. We have many new homes, millions of new installations of electricity, telephones, radio sets, automobiles, parks, roads. The purchasing power of wages has "steadily increased." Unemployment "in the sense of distress" is disappearing. School attendance is larger. We have saved more money and given more to charity. The only flaws are the lagging recovery of the agricultural, coal and textile industries.

These claims have been advanced so often, and criticized so often, that the response is almost automatic, and is hardly worth making. "Economy" has been chiefly the inevitable result of liquidation of war agencies, partly a niggardly refusal to undertake or maintain desirable activities, without great benefit to the Treasury. The foreign debt settlement will have to be revised. The small taxpayer has benefited much more from tax reduction than the administration desired him to benefit, on account of the insistence of congressional progressives. Exports have increased largely as the result of the export of capital through enormous loans, many of them of dubious wisdom. Production and the national income have grown, as they have grown under many previous administrations, but due to scientists, technicians, business men, workers, educators, and good fortune rather than to acts of Republican statesmen. The purchasing power of wages showed far greater increase under Wilson, and as a result of the 1920-1923 deflation of prices, than since Coolidge assumed office. It has not risen nearly as fast as productivity. Unemployment caused great distress last winter; the number of unemployed was estimated at all the way from two to six million. Agriculture, coal and textiles have not merely lagged behind other industries; in many respects they have grown worse, while the administration has remained inactive. On the whole, this section of the speech is the work, not of an economist, but of an average publicity man.

It may be argued that Mr. Hoover is under a political compulsion to defend the past; but that he must be judged by what he will do when he is free of the Coolidgites. His discussion of the problem of agriculture is his most serious claim to consideration in this respect. In some ways it is an unusually discerning discussion. Agriculture is, as he says, many industries, not one; and therefore all its ills cannot be cured by a single specific. The habit of reliance on growing land values for agricultural profits is an injurious one. Post-war deflation made it disastrous. The smallness of the farm as a business unit puts it at a disadvantage with industry. Coöperation is a partial solution of this difficulty, but the traditional coöperative is not enough. To this point one reads with relief for the intelligence displayed, and hope for a real contribution. But almost the next paragraph dashes that hope. "An adequate tariff is the foundation of farm relief." Probably no authoritative economist in the country could be found to endorse that statement. It implies, either that all farmers may soon dispose of all they can raise in the domestic market, or that they can practise profitable "dumping" in foreign markets—an end sought by the promoters of the McNary-Haugen Bill, which Mr. Hoover vigorously rejects. The first implication is obviously absurd, the second, Mr. Hoover himself will not accept. Next, he says that increased transportation charges account for a large portion of the spread between prices to consumers and prices to the farmers. This has been demonstrated to be untrue by several investigations. Transportation charges account for a very small portion of the spread; it might be well to lower them, but the matter is not of great importance. It is more nearly true that the higher transportation charges of the American farmer than of the Canadian interferes with his ability to sell profitably in foreign markets. But there is considerable doubt whether improved waterways would help this situation. We have never seen a convincing demonstration that they would, and we are reminded of New York State's losing venture in an improved Erie canal. It certainly is not true that "there is no more vital method of farm relief." Finally, Mr. Hoover comes to his endorsement of the platform pledge to create farmer-controlled stabilizing corporations, financed with government money. This is the Republican substitute for the McNary-Haugen proposal. It is subject to exactly the same economic objection; if the corporations raised prices to the farmer, they might encourage production to such a point that the corporation could not possibly buy and hold off the market the necessary amounts of crops without creating an impossible drain on their financial resources. The essential point of the whole matter—control of output—Mr. Hoover does not mention.

Mr. Hoover is clearly on shaky ground when he attributes American prosperity in large degree to the protective tariff. No economist could earn the respect of his fellows by such a statement unless he put up a far better defense of it than this. But this is not the place to discuss tariff theory. The important point is that the candidate, while deploring the unsettling effect of a possible revision of the tariff laws downward, pledges revision upward. He wants to provide "real protection against the shifting of economic tides in our various industries." Is he not aware that we now are supposed to have a flexible tariff, which can be changed administratively as a result of expert studies of comparative costs of production? Surely so great an economist

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cannot prefer tariff-making through congressional log-rolling. And he should know that the unsettling effect on business of tariff changes lies in the uncertainty as to future prices, whether those changes are to be upward or downward.

The façade of a fine economic structure is sketched by the promise to coördinate the great public works now contemplated, such as water transportation, flood control, hydro-electric power and irrigation, and to adjust the construction of these and other projects such as roads and buildings so as to take up the slack of unemployment. With full development, this might be made the keynote of a national economic policy worthy of Mr. Hoover's reputation. But the sketch is so vague as not to give us much confidence that he so conceives it. Are we to have public or private operation of the hydro-electric facilities? Is he really planning to use the national surplus to create great public improvements, and to take the necessary measures for taxing, for borrowing, for planning, so as to create thus a really serviceable balance wheel in the economic order? If so, he must turn his back on nearly everything that the Coolidge administration has stood for. Perhaps a future address will give us more about the dimensions and proportions of this edifice. It is not hopeful, however, to read further along in the message that "Government should not engage in business in competition with its citizens."

There are many fine words about abolishing poverty and safeguarding equality of opportunity. But there are few hints, aside from the subjects mentioned above, as to how Mr. Hoover would implement these aspirations. How would he ensure that one immense capacity to produce shall really result in sufficiently higher wages and lower prices? By what concrete evidence can he demonstrate that the activities of his Department in eliminating waste have benefited the consumer? We have searched for such evidence in vain. He does not discuss such mundane measures against unemployment as a national system of labor exchanges, or unemployment insurance. He does not mention such subjects as Boulder Dam, Muscle Shoals, or the control of the power companies—subjects which certainly are as weighty in import for the general economic welfare and for equality of opportunity as any.

The speech, at best, contributes to Mr. Hoover's economic reputation merely a hope deferred. It was said of the platform that it was not expected to say anything. It may be said of an acceptance speech that it must remain vague and general. Let us wait, then, for the expository speeches to come. We hope only that, having heard these, we shall not be told to wait for Mr. Hoover in action, and then that we shall not have to wait forever, in order to see in him that great statesmanship which his admirers believe him to possess.

Should the Kellogg Treaty Be Rejected?

MR. FRANK H. SIMONDS, in a letter to the New York Times, points out that Europe is putting an interpretation on the Kellogg treaty far different from that which most Americans have given it. In this country, it is generally assumed that we have agreed only to renounce war as an instrument of national policy, as between the United States and each of the other signatories; and that if a dispute arises *to which we are a party,* we agree to do our best to settle it by pacific means. But Europe, Mr. Simonds says, "believes that as a consequence of the new treaty, the United States will join in any League action to employ military and naval force against any nation pronounced by the League authority to be an aggressor, or at the very least will respect the naval blockade and the financial and economic boycotts which the same body may pronounce against any power." This, Mr. Simonds thinks, would be a more serious commitment than actual membership in the League. The latter would have "bound us to share in European operations, having participated in the discussions which led to undertaking them," while the Kellogg treaty "would bind us morally to share in similar operations which had been decided upon in our absence." Of the two, Mr. Simonds feels that it is hardly to be questioned that League membership would be the less dangerous. He also feels, however, that there is no danger that this European interpretation will be accepted by America. We shall take the treaty to mean only what it says. In urging its rejection he does so, not because it menaces our freedom of action, but because of this disparity between the two interpretations. "If," he says, "at the moment of a European crisis we refused to act, we should be exposed to precisely the same storm of criticism and reprobation which attended our rejection of the peace treaties."

Mr. Simonds is an intelligent and informed observer, and his opinions are entitled to careful consideration. Is he right in this case? First of all, it should be said that no storm of criticism we might subsequently incur by failing to live up to Europe's idea of the meaning of the treaty could very well be more severe than that which we shall suffer if we now reject the Kellogg treaty. Europeans have never understood our peculiar machinery by which the Senate shares with the President the treaty-making power. They were amazed to learn that President Wilson's signature on the Versailles document had no validity without a Senate ratification, and the absence of comment in the European press in recent weeks on the present treaty's prospects in the upper house would seem to indicate that what was learned in 1919 has been forgotten. The Kellogg treaty never had any sincere European impetus behind it except M. Briand's original desire

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to get America into a bilateral agreement with France which would enhance the latter country's prestige on the Continent; in its present form it is regarded as a partial duplication of the League which, if proposed by some other power, while Uncle Sam stood aloof, would have been rejected as an idle gesture. From Europe's point of view, our Foreign Minister (for Europeans will never understand that our Secretary of State does not fill that role) has foisted upon the world an eccentric document which the nations accept only because of its source, as the relatives of a rich old man listen respectfully to his fatuous advice. If we were now to repudiate our own proposal, the wrath and indignation abroad would know no bounds, and it would be many years before any further suggestion from this country—unless it proposed cancellation of the war debts—would get a hearing.

Europe's misunderstanding of the treaty's terms is a matter which has some interesting aspects. It is not based on anything Mr. Kellogg or any other official has said. It is not based on the text of the document. Then where does it come from? Obviously, the wish is the only progenitor of the thought. The Allied nations are most eager to get the United States to resume the interest in their affairs we displayed during the War. Specifically, they want the war debts greatly reduced, or preferably cancelled *in toto*. They would like to see payment of these debts made dependent on payment of German reparations; some of them hope that the reparations themselves can be made into private obligations and these sold to American investors. These themes are the King Charles' head of European thoughts about the United States. Since they come up every few months, even when there is no occasion for them, it is not surprising that the Kellogg negotiations should bring them forth.

It may safely be assumed that the statesmen of the European nations are far from being so gullible, or so badly informed about America, as they pretend. Most of them probably know quite well that our period of isolation is not over. To pretend that they believe it is tends to make them popular with their own constituents and, they perhaps argue, may help to hasten the day when American coöperation becomes a reality again. It is true that if we sign the treaty and then do only what we have agreed, and not what Europe hopes, we shall be criticized; but we should have been criticized equally for failing to "participate" even if the treaty had never been thought of. Europe is simply up to her old game with us; and in deciding whether the Kellogg treaty should be signed, we have every right to disregard the disappointment with us, and consider the document on its merits.

As to this, the worst that can be said has already been expressed, in these columns and elsewhere. The reservations made by France and Great Britain greatly reduce the significance of the proposal. The lack of machinery for deciding whether any given war is "defensive" makes the distinction a farcical one. If put to the test of a real war, the treaty would probably go to pieces. Nevertheless, the New Republic believes it should be signed. No situation which can arise under it is likely to be any worse than those which are now possible. The renunciation of war, however cynically and guardedly made, will have an effect upon the popular psychology which in the course of time may be of incalculable value. This is a necessary first step which must be taken, however awkwardly, before we can go on to a real struggle with the curse of militarism. The mere fact that the treaty is in existence will make more difficult the propaganda of the big-navy men in all the chief countries. They will not be fettered; but that they are hindered at all is something. And it may prove of use to European nations, even with the United States standing aloof, as a lawyer sometimes performs a valuable service by bringing together the parties to a quarrel and letting them argue out their grievances.

Finally, the change in America, which Europe expects and Mr. Simonds does not, may be brought about, though so gradually that to the impatient statesmen it will seem as though no progress were being made. There is a legitimate and desirable degree to which the United States ought to interest herself in European affairs. Indeed, with her multiplicity of world-wide economic interests, she cannot avoid participation, though she may be able to choose its character. That choice the text of the Kellogg treaty leaves open to us. We are under no obligation to act in relation to a quarrel between any other two powers unless we wish to do so in each specific case—a difference from the position of a League member which ought to appeal as powerfully to an anti-Leaguer like Mr. Simonds as it apparently does to another anti-Leaguer, Senator Borah. To say that America must never play a part in world affairs is a counsel of despair, as unreal as it is unwise. The Kellogg treaty signs a blank check of participation; and it remains for the people to say when and in what terms it shall be filled out.

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The Capitalism of Automobiles

IT WOULD seem, at first blush, that anyone seeking a justification of capitalist individualism might find it in the growth of the automobile industry in the United States. The first cars produced were regarded generally as curiosities; few believed that their use would ever become common. Prizes were offered for motor vehicles which could run a few miles without a breakdown. The efforts of numerous inventors and their backers provided a wide array of experiments, out of which a process of almost natural selection preserved those types and styles that were destined to be most durable, economical and convenient. A body of experts could hardly have chosen the features which ought to survive. There were, of course, many failures and much wasted effort in this experimentation, but energy and ingenuity were constantly attracted to the industry by the large and easy profits of those who found a market.

Then came the period, after cars had become more practical, when they were commonly regarded as luxuries, contributing little or nothing to the essential economic and social life of the nation. Even as late as 1910, conservative bankers were disturbed because, as they thought, the luxury-serving automobile was drawing capital away from "productive" uses, and thus contributing to business depression. Even yet, in Europe, automobiles are thought of as a prerogative merely of the well-to-do, and so are subject to luxury taxation.

But competition, combined with the genius of individuals peculiarly adapted to the task, worked out the technique of mass production, reduced prices, broadened markets, and rendered the automobile a necessity. Without its widespread use it would be impossible to imagine either the economic complex or the social setting of today in the United States. We see country life basically altered by it. We see changes in the locations where people may live in and about cities, and in their means of recreation. We see a great network of hard-surfaced roads, bearing not only privately-owned cars, but trucks and buses which have provided a new elasticity to our transportation system and aided its efficiency in vital ways, thus, in turn, altering the location of industrial plants.

Even in the latter history of the industry, competition and the freedom of individuals and groups to experiment have not been without their social uses. Study, for instance, the development of the two greatest concerns—Ford and General Motors. Ford was an early apostle of the sacrifice of everything else to the production of a single, ultra-standardized, inexpensive car. To this end he built up his vertical organization from mine and forest to assembling plant, invented and installed his great and costly single-purpose machinery, adapted and readapted all his processes. The result was the swarm of millions of black "Lizzies," rising out of the red chaos of the blast furnace to buzz out over the furthest country roads. All was sternly directed by a single intelligence to a single utilitarian end. This sort of thing is what we might have expected from a governmentally built-up and socially directed automobile industry, if it had had the good luck to find a genius for a directing head. General Motors, on the other hand, was originally formed on a plan the exact opposite of Ford's. Instead of concentrating on a single product, and risking all on a single throw, its guiding idea was to assemble every kind of car in sight, to buy up every new and possibly popular invention, with the aim of spreading the risk and scoring a shot-gun kill. At first the application of the plan seemed to be pure gambling, based almost wholly on chance—and, indeed, in those days the varying fortunes of producers in hitting the public fancy seemed to be more compounded of luck than anything else. Later the General Motors' spread of risk and the attempt to cover the market was rendered more systematic by a damper on the policy of expansion, the dropping of unprofitable lines, and the division of the products into price classes.

In recent years, both Ford and General Motors have learned from each other. Ford has been forced to make concessions to basic improvements, to style and variety. General Motors has been forced to adopt, especially for its cheaper products, the major essentials of mass production and low price. Even yet, there are great differences between these major concerns which may be proved on the field of competition. One still practises extreme centralization; the other has left a wide scope for autonomy, though centralizing the management of essentials.

It is a question whether, under an economy subject in all its details to social planning and direction, we should have had an automobile industry growing from a production of 4,192 cars in 1899, with a wholesale value of $4,899,443, to a production of 4,428,286 cars in 1926, with a wholesale value of $3,163,756,676. It is a question whether there would have been the extensive trial, rejection and selection of types, devices and styles. It is a question whether there would have been the experimentation in methods of production and administration. It is uncertain whether the uses of consumers would have been so thoroughly consulted and developed, the great additions to the common life made.

Nevertheless, this is not the whole story. For one thing, the history of the industry furnishes a startling exception to much of the classical econo-

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mists' account of the way society, under capitalist individualism, musters its resources and turns them to new uses. This is made plain by an excellent new book, "A Financial History of the American Automobile Industry," by Lawrence H. Seltzer, which won the Hart, Schaffner and Marx prize in economics and is published by Houghton Mifflin Company. The usual account of the accumulation and investment of capital is something as follows. Individuals, by enduring sacrifice of present enjoyment and exercising foresight, save part of their incomes. Out of such savings a fund of capital is accumulated. Part of this fund is lent out, on good security, at interest—some for long terms, some for short. The interest, in this case, furnishes the inducement for savings. Industry, in turn, uses for capital purposes the money thus borrowed—the long-term borrowings for fixed or permanent equipment, the short-term for liquid or working capital. Another part of the capital fund is invested in the actual ownership of business enterprises. In this case the owners of capital take a greater risk, and stand a chance of earning a larger return than mere lenders, in compensation for the risk they take. Thus new and venturesome enterprises are started. The essential features of this doctrine are: (1) that capital is thought of as a fund, arising from the savings of individuals, (2) that without these savings and this fund, industry could not acquire its necessary equipment and other capital requirements, (3) that the interest payment is a necessary inducement for the saving and investment of the capital fund, and, (4) that the possibly larger return of profits is necessary to induce savers to take the risks of industrial or business ownership.

But Mr. Seltzer makes it clear that most of the automobile companies started without the investment or risk of much new capital out of any "fund" of "savings." The inventor or promoter —usually a combination of the two—would order parts from machine shops and foundries already in existence and equipped to make the things needed. Thus they did not need an extensive plant. Most of the capital necessary to start was already existent in physical form, extending back from the fabricating establishment to the steel mill and coal mine. It was "fixed" capital, but not, as is ordinarily understood by that term, dedicated inflexibly to customary uses. Nor, at the beginning, did the establishments called upon have to enlarge their plants or attract the investment of savings to do so. For one thing, the initial demands upon them were small while the automobile assemblers were feeling out their markets. For another, the supply and material firms were eager for this chance to use their idle equipment—thus utilizing "capital" already invested and without employment. Capital resources out of diversion of physical equipment from old uses, and out of existing economic waste —these are two important springs not identified by most of the deductive economists.

This process was further emphasized when, a little later, machinery firms themselves turned to the manufacture of automobiles, or when companies making older products like carriages or wagons (Studebaker) took up motor-car manufacturing.

It is true that the automobile companies issued large amounts of stock. But much of this was given to promoters, and some in partial guarantee of payment to the supply firms. The classic example of the great Ford enterprise resting on an actually paid-in cash capital of but $28,000 is typical to a degree. It does not indicate the tapping of a "fund" of money savings, or the incurring of an investor's risk, at all commensurate with the magnitude of the outcome.

Most of the motor manufacturers, moreover, had little need of liquid capital in the form of bank credit or borrowed money. Those who made supplies for them extended credit up to ninety days; the dealers who bought from them were often required to pay in part in advance with their orders, and almost invariably to pay cash on delivery. Thus the car was often sold and paid for before the manufacturer had to settle for his materials.

The profits to the successful from these proceedings were enormous, and were, to a great degree, reinvested in the business, although large cash dividends were paid at the same time. This reinvestment of profits furnished the greater part of the capital necessary for the large plants which grew up as the industry attained its majority. After analyzing the finances of eight leading automobile producers, Mr. Seltzer comes to the conclusion that not less than about 80 percent of their tangible invested capital came from reinvested profits. It must be borne in mind that this so-called "tangible" capital is to a large extent not tangible at all, but represents, in part, money paid for rights or plants no longer working. General Motors, for instance, in its first wild burst of acquisition, bought many lines which later were discontinued. It bought the Heany lamp companies, paying for them, in cash and stock, considerably more than it paid for Cadillac, or for the Buick and Olds companies combined. About all it received for this payment were patent rights which were soon voided. Yet on October 1, 1927, the securities issued for this purchase had a market value of $320,000,000, had received over $50,000,000 in cash dividends, and were receiving annual dividends at the rate of $10,000,000. Only the immense profits on the continuing properties made good on such "investments" as these. Another factor which tends to conceal the importance of reinvested profits as a source of capital is the extent to which they formed the capital resources of companies later bought by others, and thus showing on present balance sheets as assets for which cash was paid.

It may be argued, of course, that reinvested profits represent savings and sacrifice on the part of the individual stockholders, since if the company

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had not reinvested them, the stockholders would temporarily have received more in cash dividends. But when it is remembered that the stockholders were already receiving cash dividends on their actual cash investments varying from 10 up to several thousand percent, and even to infinity percent (in the cases of those who invested no cash at all)—it seems a little far-fetched to extend the original savings-and-sacrifice idea, with its concept of a capital fund, to corporate reinvestment of profits. Much more reasonable and in accord with the facts it would seem to regard these reinvested profits as a function of a progressive industry stimulating a rapidly growing consumer demand, a demand which furnished both the surplus profits and the anticipation of continually expanding markets as an incentive to the extension of plant. The process of accumulation and reinvestment of corporate surplus seems much more a social than an individual one, tied up, that is, not so much with the conscious foresight and self-deprivations of individual stockholders, as with the processes and habits of markets and corporate management. The tendency of the individual to save becomes subordinated to the habit of a great industry, resting on invention, technical advance, widespread popular use, and the resulting insistent urge to expansion. The accumulation of physical capital becomes the effort of industrial management to turn consumer demand as rapidly as possible into productive capacity—indeed, to stimulate consumer demand by lower costs—rather than the painful scraping of savings-bank depositors to provide for their future. The lead is taken, not by money motives, but by technical and industrial motives.

The cream of the jest is, that in recent years when the individual savers have to large extent invested in motor company securities, all the purposes ordinarily assigned by orthodox economics to saving, investment and risk had already been served. Their money was not needed to enlarge plants or finance experiments. The major risks had already been taken. Those who had borne them had already received their munificent gains. The investments of the saving public served, rather, to benefit financial reorganizers and to encourage the operations of stock-market speculators.

We may see, too, that the period of experiment and competition is rapidly coming to an end, and that, in so far as it survives, it is of decidedly less social benefit than it used to be. Some time ago, the industry organized its engineering forces in the Society of Automotive Engineers. Arrangements have long been made for a wide standardization of parts and materials. New devices and inventions, unless they are of revolutionary import, are by agreement simultaneously available to all manufacturers. The number of the makers has shrunk considerably, both by failures and mergers; soon we shall have a comparatively few large stabilized producers. Meanwhile, such competition as survives is mainly along the line of needless variations in external fashion—variations not demanded by consumers but thrust upon them by snobbish and expensive advertising and salesmanship. This industry, so highly efficient in production, is wasteful to a degree in merchandising, since it presses so avidly for continually enlarging volume. Only a few cars in the United States cost more than $500 to make—the rest of what we pay is what it costs to sell them. And there are continuous rumblings about the condition of the unorganized working force.

The real situation, then, seems to be this. Freedom for experiment under private, competitive ownership, stimulated by the hope of profit, was a useful institution in the case of the new and uncertain industry. But any obligations which society may owe to the promoters and owners for sacrifice and risk have already been paid off a thousandfold. And we do not need to encourage such investment in the grown-up industry; it is capable, for the most part, of financing itself. Therefore, if for any reason it should seem desirable to establish social controls over the mature industry, there would be little either in the moral obligation to past risk-takers or in the need for further savings, to prevent it. In other words, the economic theory of savings and investment does not apply.

How far the automobile industry is typical of others in this respect we should not say without further inquiry. But it is equally true that we should not continue to accept, without further inquiry, the conventional accounts of how industry grows.

GEORGE SOULE.

The Cameo

Forever over now, forever, forever gone
That day. Clear and diminished like a scene
Carven in cameo, the lighthouse, and the cove between
The sandy cliffs, and the boat drawn up on the beach;
And the long skirt of a lady innocent and young,
Her hand resting on her bosom, her head hung;
And the figure of a man in earnest speech.

Clear and diminished like a scene cut in cameo
The lighthouse, and the boat on the beach, and the two shapes
Of the woman and the man; lost like the lost day
Are the words that passed, and the pain; discarded, cut away
From the stone, as from the memory the heat of the tears escapes.

O troubled forms, O early love unfortunate and hard,
Time has estranged you into a jewel cold and pure;
From the action of the waves and from the action of sorrow forever secure,
White against a ruddy cliff you stand, chalcedony

EDNA ST. VINCENT

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I Was an Interviewer

THE interview is the grand Madam of journalism now. In the formal sheets, and even in the Hearst newspapers, it has lost some of the expansiveness it took on after its real debut in 1917. But its end, as one observes it heaving and sweating on through tabloids, "confession" magazines, novels and other autobiographies, is not yet.

It was only a minor staple of the business when I began reporting in Chicago, early in 1917. Its function, form, and performance were limited and fixed. It reported views of public officials on public matters; views of visiting celebrities on what they obligingly, and infirmly, conceived to be public matters; and what Edgar L. Humphrey, 1792 Artesian Street, had to say, indignantly, about his wife's suit for divorce. Like the magician's silk hat, it was an established property that emitted the same rabbits, eggs, or doves in the same perfunctory way. Cubs handled it. The veterans could not be spared from the important stories, those that squirmed interestingly with local politics, scandal, or crime. And the cubs, their enthusiasm for the gaudy colors of "the game" thwarted by the necessity for doing tepid interviews, resented not being permitted at least to help cover some adulterous double killing on the South Side. They got the interviews and wrote them in the same cut-and-dried way.

I got and wrote scores of the inane things, mechanically, never thinking of them except as onerous pests that kept me from plunging into and writing gorgeously about the "big" stories that were constantly in picturesque eruption throughout Chicago. TWO DEAD IN LOVE PACT was apparently permanently in the headlines; and I was, as permanently, meeting the Secretary of Agriculture, and punching out, " 'American agriculture today leads the world,' the Secretary said." City editors then required accuracy in names, addresses, and quotations. Citizens, even public officials, squeaked or roared frothily when misquoted by the press, threatened to—and sometimes did—"get somebody's job for perpetrating such an outrage," and now and then sued the offending paper for libel (it being by that time, as represented by its business office, volubly contrite). What the trouble-bitten editors accordingly wanted to know about an interview was, not whether it was excitingly written, but whether it was right. Interviews accordingly became right, and dull—commonplaces expressed in clichés.

Then the United States openly joined the War; and, like everything else about journalism, the interview flew off its handle, and began the debauch that eventually turned it into the loose creature it is now. Two things were directly responsible for the change: its stays were removed by editors who suddenly realized the possibilities of the new freedom; and it was reclothed in flaming colors by reporters of imagination, who luxuriated in a talent for producing emotional words, demanding of a story only that it possess a "kick" that would make their city editors *say* something—for once, and scoffing at "the ethical and moral obligations of the press," if, indeed, they had ever heard of such things.

Indirectly, of course, the public itself was responsible for the change. When the War suddenly became an enchantingly personal thing, at home, the newspapers found it necessary to report what everyone who was at all in the public focus thought about it; what public officials were doing or intended to do about it; and what Clarence J. Miller, twenty-one, 10317 Catalpa Avenue, his mother, father, sister, and sweetheart, his employer, minister, and all his relatives, thought about his enlisting for the crusade. The atmosphere was giddy with a liberating excitement. Extraordinary ideas, experiences, and sensations spun around in a kind of epilepsy; and everyone seemed compelled to describe, discuss, and explain the phenomena to everyone else. Everyone's nose was a-quiver, itching to be stuck into everyone else's attitude toward, opinions about, and connection with, the War. Thereafter, we were only a sniff or two away from being into all of everyone else's affairs.

To satisfy, as well as report, this craving was the newspaper's job. Its problem was to give the record, the lineaments and air of refined authenticity without obscuring its glare. Now, what newspapers, at any rate, believe insures a story's acceptance as authentic, and gives it the venerated "personal touch," are names, addresses, and quotes. Ergo, the interview! It was true that, heretofore, out of it had only been pulled rabbits, eggs or doves. But then, those things were all that had been put into it. If anything and everything were crammed into the interview, could not anything and everything be brought forth? With the Hearst papers in the foreground of the action, as they usually are in maneuvers to dose the public with what it seems to want, the interview, war-style, appeared.

This demand created by the War for personal and what used to be regarded, old-fashionedly, as intimate experiences explains why the interview changed; but the local room does not bother with *why*, particularly when its product is a mass-circulation paper; the reagents are *what*, *where*, and *how*. Nor is a reporter instructed what to write into an interview, or how to write it there. The editor on a city desk may order, "Jazz this up," or "Straightaway news story on this," or at

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most, as the result of a policy order from the front office, "Throw the hooks into this guy. He's come out against the Mayor and we're off him." But the writer's selection and treatment of his material is determined by the never-exactly-defined news policy of his paper. And that policy is simply "in the air." One breathes it, saturates himself with it, so that his copy automatically takes on the required slant and tone.

The notion of Upton Sinclair and the rest of the naïve evangelists who try to exorcise a devil from the press, that the fictions in a newspaper are deliberately concocted with premeditated intent to deceive, and that the machinations have a sinister motive, is moonshine, except, of course, in cases in which the paper or its owner is selfishly interested. These humorless crusaders expose their ignorance of the business by attacking a devil who is not there. The "diabolism" of the press lies in its conception and treatment of news as news, not as truth (with which news has nothing to do); its stories are concocted to excite the attention and interest of readers; and its motive is to secure an ever larger circulation and, through this, ever more advertising. "Truth," my city editor once exasperatedly informed a deputation from a civic organization that had been pecking at him to promise to keep crime news off the front pages (in Chicago!), "truth doesn't get *my* pay raised. Increased circulation does."

That concept of the newspaper I had supposed to be generally understood, if not accepted, now. But "perversion," "misstatement," and downright "fabrication" continue to be charged against interviews, as if—I am speaking as a reporter—there existed any other method of getting the things into print. Interviews, to a much greater extent than news generally, are perverted, misstated, misrepresented, and, oftener than even their critics realize, fabricated entire, particularly when their subject is "a prominent person," which to newspapers, of course, means a politician, movie actress, radical, "murderess," or anyone else who is sensationally in the news.

I have interviewed "prominent persons" galore, and, with few exceptions, a literal transcription of the proceedings would have exposed them as ridiculously inflated ladies and gentlemen with a conglomeration of platitudes in their heads. It was up to me to supply the story with the personality and sentiments that would fit the public's conception of the subject and the subject's conception of himself. The error the critics of the process make lies, conventionally, in imputing the inspiration to Satan instead of to Pan.

In six years on my paper I wrote hundreds of interviews, with public officials, celebrities, returned heroes of the War, criminals, and frightened little persons who, through circumstances as unintelligible to them as they were beyond control, had suddenly become news. It was splendid training in facile ingenuity, for I immediately learned that, if I were to turn out the dressed beef required, I had to provide it myself. The actual interviews were rarely more than a hurried exchange of commonplaces. The job resolved itself into using something the subject had said for a springboard and diving into the real interviewing on the way back to the office. Thus a newly elected Food Commissioner would suggest sauerkraut as one of several inexpensive, nutritious foods that might be popularized as a war economy measure, adding, perhaps, that the distrust of sauerkraut as a *bourgeois* dish was not well founded, inasmuch as he knew a society woman who used it. A moment of meditation by the reporter would produce an interview with a headline, GOLD COAST EATS SAUERKRAUT AS WAR MEASURE, FOOD CHIEF SAYS, and a sub-head, CHICAGO SOCIETY BEAUTY'S FAMOUS COMPLEXION RESULT OF KRAUT DIET. And if the reporter were a good reporter, there would be another headline, "UNPATRIOTIC" CHARGED, the reporter having telephoned a professional eaglet, preferably female, informed her that the Food Commissioner proposed to campaign for German foods, and secured from her the desired retort. Further, if the newspaper were a live one, it would immediately shoo reporters after interviews on whether eating sauerkraut was treasonable or not. If properly "played," those interviews would shout from the front page, symposium fashion, for days.

Early in my interviewing career, my imagination failed to high-jump facts with the necessary expertness, and once when I was scooped imaginatively on an interview, I was—well, criticized. I protested that the opposition story had been faked. "Sure," my city editor said. "They're arguing about the Resurrection yet, but it's been a damn good story for two thousand years. Didn't God give *you* any imagination? What d'you think we're getting out here, an almanac?" I was ambitious, and though the experience was chafing, it was enlightening. Thereafter, I did use the imagination God gave me. I filched from books, magazines, moving pictures, and the stage, drew on all the general and special knowledge I had or could obtain, and wrote interviews properly, as if they were vaudeville acts, short stories, or lectures to sixth grades. The application was rewarded, in true land-of-opportunity style. During my last two years on the paper I did practically nothing else.

Interviews with persons from whom the public expects certain traditional sentiments and opinions are the easiest of all to write. But interviewing persons whose sentiments and opinions are opposed to those expected from them is a tough and thankless job. Interviewing returned heroes of the War was extremely tough. For three months after the War ended, I covered returning troops, and while the personal "I" gaped and, youthfully, thrilled at the heresies mouthed by those troops, and my own

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understanding quickened and expanded under the stimulation of their realistic points of view, the reportorial, professional "I" was in despair at their refusal to talk over the heroics expected by the public and, accordingly, by my city desk. The heroes, mostly sourly, and if nagged, obscenely, refused to emit romantic sentiments about the War, their experiences, or themselves. They unanimously snickered at the Y. M. C. A. They observed with distressing sincerity that they'd like to see the ——— ——— ——— who'd get them into another war. They declared that the Huns they had met were highly efficient fighters who "took it standing up," or scared kids with spectacles who "should 've been home with Mamma." As far as they knew, "atrocities" were "a lot o' bunk cooked up by the flat-feets at home who put prohibition over on us." And as for *la belle France*—well, the French "broads" were fair enough. But, by and large, it was no wonder this Lafayette left home. Yet as heroes, "the boys" had to gush in the newspapers; and so they did, the "interviews" being mostly fabricated entire. I protested to my city desk, as did every other reporter covering troops, that the actual stories the heroes told, the opinions they had, would make better, more interesting, more shocking reading than the gaudy stuff we had to turn out. But our editors either dismissed what we told them as prejudice or, accepting it as fact, wearily observed that they did not care "to get mobbed." And so, for us reporters, writing interviews about the War was a perfect apprenticeship for writing a grammar-school textbook in American history.

My paper dealt in the primary ideas and emotions of its mass-circulation, as all mass-circulation newspapers, of course, do, and so in it a civilized skepticism or realistic point of view had no place. Our city editor, I remember, used to wink solemnly when we turned in some exceptionally flamboyant drool, and even hold his nose as he passed the story to the copy-desk. That editor's attitude gave the proceedings the air of a confidence game, and kept us softer-boiled souls sane with laughter, but nothing was permitted in print that might jar the Average Reader's faith in the platitudes on which he had been raised. We printed nothing that conflicted with the People's belief in the profound wisdom and justice of the People themselves. And we thrived, mightily, the paper making, as it continues to make, a few million dollars' profit a year.

It followed that the intelligent from whom we sought interviews, and who were interested in publicity or in having the paper friendly toward them, often met us with, "You fix up something, and I'll stand for it." Thus I quoted bank presidents, lawyers, actresses, politicians, explorers, scientists, and ministers on subjects from birth control and bobbed hair to crime waves and the Einstein theory, subjects about which neither the person interviewed nor myself knew anything whatever. The efforts the really intelligent sometimes made to talk on a subject about which they were informed—scientists discussing scientific developments, for instance—usually failed. They could not make the matter comprehensible. I often left scientists, economists—specialists in every field—and interviewed the subject in an encyclopedia instead, hooking a few simple facts around which to write the interview.

On controversial matters of public interest, or to ballyhoo a personal interest of the paper itself (with the Hearst papers, these personal-interest bogeys are extensive and pestiferous, ranging from local politics, Roman Catholicism, and Marion Davies' films, to the perpetually idyllic and never-under-any-circumstances earthquaken climate of California), symposia are invoked. There is in every local room a "sucker list," a directory of lay prominents of all classes and activities who can be counted upon to give interviews on anything and from either side of the fence.

Our paper was forever embroiled in local political feuds. We were, accordingly, forever preparing symposia supporting its position or attacking that held by the opposition. It was a nauseating business, and we despised it, while cynically accepting it as part of "the game." I remember that one of our chief aids in symposia was a minister, well known for his abhorrence of privacy and his startlingly loud mouth. This pious soul was in the paper three days of every week, it seems to me, shouting opinions about everything, and always in the direction in which we pointed his nose. If we were attacking the chief of police, then so was this reverend, in an interview picturing Chicago as a sink of inquity, rotting with organized crime that found its ally in a reprehensibly inefficient police force. If we were boosting Chicago, upholding it against the tut-tuts or the downright attacks of, say, the newspapers of New York, then so was this frocked chameleon, in an interview declaring Chicago to be the only honest, red-blooded American city in the country, with the finest park system in the world. This divine was so useful to us reporters that we used him overmuch, and killed the goose. The day a rival paper appeared with a story reporting that our "sucker" had deserted Christ for journalism and was writing editorials for us in the guise of interviews, our managing editor raved, and we had to get another parrot. The report was, of course, false. It was merely one of the practical jokes that Chicago newspapers still play on one another now and then. But it was effective.

Interviews still fill the newspapers. But the really exciting variety that followed the War has writhed on into the tabloids and magazines. Press agents for politicians, actors, authors, scientists, packing houses, churches, department stores, athletes and apparently every other person and activity, do the bulk of one's interviewing now; and the "sucker list" has become a directory of all the press agents in town.

BARTLETT CORMACK.

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Profiteering on Grief

IF I SHOULD die tomorrow, my wife would telephone an undertaker. A well modulated, genteel voice coming from the other end of the wire would inform her that Mr. Jones or Mr. Smith would be glad to take care of the remains. Since my house is not large enough to accommodate a corpse with comfort, the body would be removed to a funeral parlor. Let us imagine, for the purposes of this article, that I am removed to a certain well known funeral establishment in Manhattan.

The suave gentleman who answered the telephone takes my wife in his car to the funeral home. She enters a lobby that is supplied with quietness, high ceilings, imitations of ancient tapestry, marble pillars, and three gentlemen with gray striped trousers. These gentlemen are distinguished and silent. They make no abrupt motions.

One of them leads my wife into a palatial "arrangement room," a room of subdued lights with a statue of Paul and Virginia and a huge Italian desk on which reposes a contract and a fountain pen. After giving certain necessary details concerning the corpse, my wife is led through richly carpeted suites to the casket room. She is feeling tired. Presumably she is not at the moment in a bargaining mood. Having had no previous experience in buying caskets for husbands, she is somewhat confused. In front of her in the casket room is a bewildering array of models, black cloth, pearl cloth, flashing white silk, polished wood, bronze, silver handles. The conspicuous caskets in the center of the room cost from $300 to $1,500. The attendant gives her a glimpse of a room where the especially noble containers run up to $30,000. She sees on one of these cast-bronze ones an allegorical fresco with all sorts of Egyptian figures of death. The suggestion imparted by her guide is that if she contemplates elegance she can buy in *that* room, but that normal widows are satisfied with cheap caskets ranging from $400 to $500.

Behind glass doors around the walls are rows of cheaper caskets which she does not examine. There is only one really cheap casket in the whole lot, a plain black one in the corner which nobody drags out for her attention. It costs $100. Rather absently she finally selects a casket that seems about "average" in its equipment. She tells the mortician that the body may be kept in a private room for two days. Then she goes back to the "arrangement room" to see about burial.

My wife knows nothing about New York cemeteries. When the mortician tells her that a single lot in Kensico cemetery can be secured for $220, she accepts. When the funeral is over she receives a bill for $674. That is the average burial bill of New York estates of persons in my economic class, that is to say, of persons who carry $5,000 of life insurance and whose total estate is less than $10,000.

Suppose, however, that the mortician had discovered in my family a rich uncle who was indiscreet enough to volunteer a contribution toward funeral costs in the presence of the mortician. Would the expense have been limited to $674? Not unless this mortician happened to be a mortuary freak. Any imaginative undertaker is able to transform a $674 funeral into a $1,500 funeral without the addition of a single pall-bearer. Last year in New York a certain marine engineer died and his firm volunteered to meet the funeral expenses. The morticians, the same ones who buried Rudolph Valentino, sent the widow the following bill:

Casket, selected	$750.00
Case stone vault	150.00
Face veil	7.50
Slumber robe	100.00
Embalming	50.00
Casketing and dressing	20.00
Grave opening	25.00
Evergreen grave lining, Lowering device	25.00
Hearse	45.00
Limousines, 4 @ $40	160.00
Pall bearers (4) at Church and cemetery	60.00
Pall bearers' limousine	40.00
Delivering outside case to cemetery	15.00
Death notices	24.00
Floral door pieces 2 @ $10	20.00
Palm decoration at Church and home	75.00
Funeral director and assistants	35.00
General service charge	50.00
Extra limousine	40.00
Flower car	40.00
Transcript of death certificate	1.50
	$1,732.00

What is a face veil? And what is a slumber robe? A face veil is something respectful spread over the face of the corpse while it lies in a room, for the use of which the bereaved can be charged seven and a half dollars. The mortician keeps the veil after its arduous service. Likewise a slumber robe is a garment which may envelop the corpse while it lies in state, for which the widow can be charged one hundred dollars. It, also, is saved for later use. A limousine is an automobile renting for fifteen dollars an afternoon for which a mortician can charge forty dollars. And so on. There are at least two items in this bill which are legitimate expense, the twenty-five dollars for opening the grave and the one dollar and fifty cents for the transcript of the death certificate.

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Now suppose that I should die tomorrow at Bellevue Hospital, a complete pauper. A few moments after my last gasp my body would be transferred to the City Mortuary next door. It would be carried down to a refrigerated cellar, ticketed, recorded, and slid into a big pigeon-hole exactly like the largest drawer of a filing cabinet. There I would lie until my funeral. If I died without decent clothing I would be dressed in a shroud that costs the city of New York thirty-two cents.

After that my body would be put into a plain pine box about seven feet long which costs the city one dollar and seventy-three cents. It would be carried by a city hearse to the wharf where a city ferry boat would take it to Harts' Island, New York's pauper burial ground. There I would be buried "three deep" by prisoners under the direction of a city employee.

My city funeral would cost twelve dollars. That is the figure which the city itself estimates as covering the whole cost except the cemetery land—and the twelve dollars includes the free use of a funeral chapel where my friends could hold services.

What is the difference between this twelve-dollar funeral and the $674 kind? Tradition. Tradition which costs the people of New York at least thirty million dollars a year.

What I have said thus far is only an introduction to the subject of the high cost of dying. The figures concerning the cost of funerals for New York estates were taken from a book on funeral costs which has just been published by Putnam's. It is the fruitage of a year's research by a staff of experts under a national committee financed by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, and its author is John C. Gebhart. Mr. Gebhart has produced a masterpiece of social research. If every consumer of caskets in the country could be persuaded to read it, America would save at least one hundred millions a year.

The most interesting part of Mr. Gebhart's study is the contrast which he draws between the funeral extravagance of America and the economic restraint of the Continent. "The general tendency in Europe," he says, "is to regard the burial of the dead, together with all other funeral arrangements, as a public utility which must be controlled and regulated, to some degree at least, by the State."

Switzerland has free burial for all its citizens. Zurich sells its own coffins and other funeral merchandise, and supplies free of charge a complete burial service to citizens who wish it, at a cost to the city of about twenty dollars per funeral. The Swiss cities and many German cities provide "extra" funerals above the free-funeral grade at a cost below that of the cheapest American funeral. Dresden has three classes of municipal funerals with standard charges, and Munich has six. Dresden's highest-priced hearse costs nine dollars and fifty-two cents; plain wooden coffins sell for eight dollars and fifty-seven cents. Munich's highest-priced Class 1 funeral is $176.83, exclusive of the grave. Munich has no private morticians.

Mr. Gebhart has revealed the tragic effect of costly funerals upon incomes of the poor in our larger cities. Taking the industrial-policy holders of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company who pay their insurance in tiny instalments by the week, he discovered that their average funeral bill was $363.13, while their average insurance with the Metropolitan was $308.59. Even the widows of New York who are on the city's charity list spend, on the average, more than $300 for their husbands' funerals.

The funeral industry is revealed in Mr. Gebhart's study as wasteful and inefficient. A few large establishments do an enormous business, but the average undertaker in the United States has only forty-four funerals a year. The small undertakers who exist on one funeral a month charge all that the traffic will bear, making a profit on caskets of 300 to 400 percent. Quite commonly they measure their bill by the amount of insurance available.

If we are tempted to blame the undertakers for their exploitation, we should remember that they are simply applying to death the current theories of business enterprise. What makes their practices seem brutal is that grief weakens sales resistance. A man who buys an automobile is presumably hardy enough to endure the practice of *caveat emptor,* but a widow who buys a casket is supposed to be somewhat overwhelmed and non-sagacious. Of course, no one can tell how much the conduct of bereaved persons is determined by grief and how much by suggestion. Sparta produced men and women without tears; Hollywood is producing a pattern of death-bed conduct which crescendos into a loud and astonished scream, even when the dead departed has been a nuisance for fifteen years.

If it is the thing to do, to lose business sagacity in stormy grief when a relative dies, most people can manage to be overwhelmed. If it is the thing to do, to spend the family's last dollar on a gaudy funeral, 99 percent of the citizenry will follow the beaten path.

Americans would bury their dead with simplicity and cheapness if it could be made clear that the community approved of simplicity and cheapness. Men who are sober do not throw away money deliberately. In the absence of any organized public opinion on the subject of funeral costs, the morticians set the standard by playing upon the vanity of the bereaved.

Religion and religious institutions do not seem to be directly responsible for most of the extravagance of funerals. The most ardent believers in the resurrection of the body do not argue that a man can be saved from purgatory or hell by a gold-handled casket. Economic emulation is at the root of the matter. The family, in defeat at the death

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of one of its members, asserts its social position in the community through display in the funeral. An expensive casket is like an August fur around the neck of a millionaire's wife; its decorative value is important, but not nearly so much so as its advertising function.

Along with the motive of emulation in the funeral goes the feeling of guilt. All normal people have memories of neglect and pain that cluster about their dead.—I should have waked him up to give him that medicine. She *could* have had that fur coat. Why did I slam the door in his face? Such a crazy thing to quarrel over a piece of butter!—Many a bronze casket is the rueful atonement of a cold wife, or perhaps a substitute for the letters that were never written to mother. The funeral bill is a vicarious cross.

In the World War, American mothers dispensed with costly funerals for the dead soldiers because other mothers did. The international standard of war burials without caskets or embalming or processions was a community standard more powerful than that set up by the mortician. It endured after the War to the extent that it prevented the return of soldiers' bodies from the battlefields of France.

Is it possible that a government which buries soldiers economically in time of war will come to bury civilians in time of peace? The most serious obstacle to such a practice in America is the superstition of the citizen that he will be tainted by "charity" if the community intervenes at the death of his beloved. This same citizen will accept schools, parks, playgrounds, museums and free clinics from the community because it has been made clear to him that he will not lose social caste in the process. He would accept municipal funerals in the same way if he could once become accustomed to them.

The mechanics of socializing the funeral industry would be relatively simple. By every normal test the funeral industry is a natural public utility. New York City could build a funeral cathedral for a tiny fraction of the cost of Bishop Manning's ecclesiastical colossus on Morningside Heights. This funeral cathedral could be supplied with scores of private chapels and rooms for lying in state, palms and flower gardens that would eclipse in beauty and dignity anything provided by private morticians. If the city can make a pine-box coffin for one dollar and seventy-three cents today, it could certainly produce a simple, cloth-covered coffin for twenty-five dollars, which is about three times the cost of plain coffins in Dresden. It is probable that for $100 the city could provide grave and funeral, hearse and funeral chapel decorated with palms—and not ask the taxpayers for a cent.

Where is there a city in America progressive enough to undertake this significant piece of social pioneering?

PAUL BLANSHARD.

Washington Notes

IN my simple-minded way I have often puzzled over the strength of the party tie, marveled at its power to keep men in line against their reason, their beliefs, their ardent desires and personal prejudices. It is, of course, easier to understand in the case of those who are holding office, have held office, or want to. To them, party regularity is more or less essential. If they are seeking any elective or appointive place, if they have even a trace of ambition for political preferment, there is nothing else to do. And to those who have held office there is always a certain party obligation which I can appreciate and understand. But what gets me is the unreasoning party regularity of the fellows who are not in office, haven't been there, have no desire to be there, who have no connection with active party politics.

The person I have in mind at this moment is none other than that great and generally outspoken man, Nicholas Murray Butler. Few persons revere Dr. Butler more than I. His wisdom, his learning, his high character, personal charm and pre-convention courage all make the greatest sort of hit with me. But what's the matter with him *now?* Why doesn't he talk out? I happen to know, what I suppose all the other 9,827,432 of his friends and acquaintances know equally well, that he is personally and politically closer to Al Smith than he is to Herbert Hoover. I know, too, as do the other 521,487 readers of the daily press interested in the political news, that Al stands on what Dr. Butler thinks is the right side of what Dr. Butler is sure is the most vital issue in the country, the one in which he is most deeply interested and for which he did brave but bootless battle at Kansas City, and that from the Butler viewpoint Herbert stands on the wrong side of that question. I know, too, that Dr. Butler personally likes Al, and I feel perfectly confident that personally he does not like Herbert. I may be mistaken, but I think Dr. Butler is now beyond the point where he hopes for any political preferment in the future, and certainly politics cannot affect him in any way at Columbia University. Aside from prohibition, there is not a single issue between the parties, not one clear-cut division. Under the circumstances, then, why do you suppose Dr. Butler does not vote his convictions this time? Why does he not speak out as he did before? Why has he nothing to say, now that the issue he wanted to make has been made? What keeps him from supporting the candidate who sees eye to eye with him on the subject closest to the Butler soul? What forces him to support the man whose views on that subject give him acute pains in the stomach, headaches and dizzy spells?

I can understand Jimmie Wadsworth, who feels on this question much the same way, though, of course, not as deeply, as Dr. Butler—albeit as deeply as he can. Jimmie, while really out of politics, has not completely grasped that unpalatable fact and still feels that there is ahead of him somewhere, hidden though it be, some sort of party future. Yes, I can understand Jimmie, and Charlie Hilles and Wallace Atterbury, the patriotic gentleman who has plunged the Pennsylvania Railroad into party politics—with what results, it will be interesting to watch. I can

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understand all of those fellows, but I cannot understand dear, dear Dr. Butler. Why didn't he go all the way over, as Tom Cochran of the well known Morgan firm did? He has far better reasons than Cochran, who does not care anything at all about issues, but just, in his Minnesota way, disliked the boy Herbert and the man Hoover with singular intensity. He was so disappointed at his failure to draft the noble Calvin that, immediately after the Hoover nomination, he broke down forty rods of party fence getting over into the Smith camp, where, so far as I know, he still is.

I give it up. It hurts my head trying to figure out the answer. Let's turn to lighter things—Frank Lowden, for example. The party tie holds him, too, but not so tightly that he is unable to take a left-handed whack now and then at the party nominee, platform and policies. Nor has it prevented his reiterating his belief in the importance of the issue he considers most vital, and letting it be clearly inferred that he thinks the Democratic party has a more sympathetic and understanding attitude toward the downtrodden farmer than his own, albeit he is much too old to bolt a party just because it has put up a poor man, whom he has pointedly failed to endorse, and adopted a platform of which he publicly disapproved. Those are the only inferences which can be drawn from the Lowden attitude and privately spoken words since the convention. But oh, no, he isn't a bolter! How ridiculous! Well, maybe it is, but to all intents and purposes he seems a bolter to me—and a much bolder bolter than Butler. If he had been robbed of the nomination at Kansas City he could have gone over exactly as Cochran did, but lacking that justification he could not flop without laying himself open to the public charge of being a poor sport and a quitter.

One of the early humors of the campaign was the pained surprise expressed a few days ago by Mr. Lowden, when interviewed by the reliable and very friendly representative of the New York Times, at his summer home in Massachusetts—or it may be Connecticut—that anyone should think him piqued because he did not get the nomination. If he means me, I did not think he was piqued. In common with a considerable number of others, among them some of his most earnest and devoted supporters, male and female, I merely thought he was sore as an old crab and acted like one. And besides, what does he think is indicated by his failure to send the customary congratulatory wire to his successful rival—a forgiving nature and a sporting spirit?

Washington. T. R. B.

August

The tree hung like an empty glove,
The sea lay like an unstruck gong.
The hollow sky curved down in brass
Darkening to the slow bronze thunder,
And dust lay waiting in the grass
For rain that did not come. I wonder
If there is any heart worth love,
Or any beauty worth a song.

DOROTHEA MATTHEWS.

Black Encaustics

UNCLE OR MISTER?

EVER since we can remember, Uncle Billy McChedrick lived on my uncle's plantation. His house is one ramshackle room, with a yard around it filled with fruit trees, peaches, pears and plums, all planted from seed long ago and all discouragingly fruitful. Around this yard is a fence three times as high as a man's head, of hickory palings, one above the other, woven together with wires and bound to long posts like poles. This wall guards the fruit trees and keeps out the other Negroes, he trusted none of them. Two ferocious, half-starved hounds had a lair under the house; they watched and snarled like wild beasts, and the Negroes, who are as afraid as a panther is of all dogs, however small, would never risk climbing through that fence or twisting off the lock and chain from the high gate. Two cages of birds, jays and yellow hammers, hung outside the door; sometimes merely the empty cages. Inside the door stood a shotgun. He lit his house, the short time before he went to bed at night, with a twisted string of rag in a can of meat grease.

Under the hickory bird cages there always hung a set of harness, strips of leather and rope tied up with strings, rags and wire. It belonged to his horse, which he kept skinny and blind. Whenever he got a new horse the first thing he did was to punch his eyes out, "I don't want 'em lookin' back at me," he said; he feared they would put a spell on him. I have seen Uncle Bill pick the feathers off birds alive before he wrung their necks to cook them, and sit with a chunk of rotten fat meat in his hands, knocking the maggots off with his knife and eating it raw. And not once, even since the days of prohibition—which is saying a great deal down here in the provinces, where more than one man has died of gangrene after drinking the stuff brought in from the hills across the river—did he have a drink that seemed to harm him.

His wife died lately, two or three months ago—a little shrunken old woman of the Guinea type, small body, round head and big paunch—his third wife. We try not to think how he must have knocked her about. When we ask if he will marry again, he says he sho will. Soon? "Right off," he says, "de Bible say choose your lover at de grave."

When the wife had died and left old Bill like this, my uncle insisted on moving him to town. He put him in a cabin off toward the edge of the garden, a room that had been out of use for a long time. Uncle Bill had no bed there, only a box and a chair; he slept on the floor, on an old quilt that he brought to town with him. He still kept the cabin on the plantation, locked up, with more barbed wire knotted here and there on the fence and the gate. Every Saturday after he came to town he went off and got drunk with old man Dean the blacksmith, and by night almost every Saturday they were arrested and locked up. "If you'd just leave him there in the calaboose for a few days," my aunt would say, "he might learn some sense." But my uncle will not listen. "'T ain't any use trying to keep Billy sober," he says, and sends down regularly and pays him out.

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Walking about the yard—which he was supposed to tend—Uncle Bill made a lovable figure, with my uncle's old clothes and a flapping faded black hat. His broad face was covered with smiling wrinkles, his eyes twinkled when you spoke to him, you liked his pleasant old voice and his chuckle. He seemed to have no evil in him, and probably had none, his actions to be put down to emotion, instinct or self-expression.

"Do you know why," my aunt would say, "your uncle is so set on keeping old Billy here on the place, and putting up with him? It's because they nursed the same mammy, they were babies together. So you can't touch Billy. You know how your uncle is. Your uncle was put out to nurse Billy's mother, she belonged to your grandfather. A rice field darkey from South Callina."

There was tiger's milk for you, and a savage breast!

It was quite true, my uncle, whatever old Billy might be, would not let anything be done to him. He violated the tradition of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" by shielding this creature who had been a slave, and understanding his ways. Logically that ought to please Mrs. Stowe, I suppose.

Not long ago Uncle Bill fell sick, nobody knew what of; he lay on the floor, his knees doubled up, like an animal and groaned. They doctored him, but the medicine seemed to have no effect, and nobody could get him to say anything, only groan. Then one night there on the floor by himself he died.

My uncle grieves about it, and has bought Bill a plot at Cistern Hill Cemetery, behind the colored church, on land donated by his father long ago. He sits gloomily on the porch thinking of Billy and the old times.

My aunt is hardly so depressed. She has no memories bound up in the old Negro as my uncle has, but merely took him on as one of the burdens that went with the family. And she, not my uncle, has had the burden of going out there to the cabin trying to see after him these ten days Uncle Billy was sick, and getting the cook to turn him over while they poured medicine down his throat. In earlier days he was more useful to her; for whenever my uncle would not agree to vote on certain matters as she wished, all she had to do was to give old Billy three dollars and a drink and send him off to the polls to vote her way; so that in time Uncle Bill, like some of the administrations in Washington, came to associate whiskey with patriotic duty. But the suffrage for women changed all that, of course, my aunt no longer needed Uncle Bill. There are so many theories now, you wonder, she says, whether it would be better to say Uncle Bill or Mister McChedrick. If you say Uncle you make him a member of the family, in which case never mind what he was and did. If you say Mister, you clear yourself of all responsibility; it's hardly your affair.

Dark Prayers

Ruth is a plain Negro girl, or young woman, who still has her hair kinky and wears it "wrapped," which is a series of locks bound with rag strings and running one into another over her head. She thanks you humbly for any little present you may give her, and until his death this last week always waited on her father hand and foot. Uncle Amos died in the middle of the week and was buried next day, but his buryin' was this Sunday.

Ruth has just come in and stands there on the kitchen porch talking, her head bent down and her voice dying off into a plaintive singsong. She has been sitting at the church listening to the preacher and the deacons till she just couldn't stand it. Uncle Amos had been a white man's nigger. He was a fine yard-man and went about gardening, quietly, never saying much, saving his money to meet the payments on his own little house and patch, till the chills and fever took him. He had never had much to do with the Negroes, except to go to church on Sundays and for prayer meetings. So now today they had been "preaching him to hell." Over and over again the preacher had said, Lord let him go to hell, Lord let him go to hell; and the deacons had prayed, Lord send him to hell, send him to hell. The hymn was about judgment for your devilment in this world, Lord send him to hell—till she couldn't stand it any longer and had come away.

Ruth does not understand why they want her father to go down to hell-fire, when he was always a good man and served the Lord; especially since last week they had a big time preaching for the soul of Pat Haynes in Abraham's bosom and washed in the blood of the Lamb, when he was a bootlegger and crapshooter and ceased it when he was on a drunk spree, but he was a member of the lodge and gave money to the preacher and told the lodge what they got to do.

The Cure

Small though the town is, the paths that cross each other on the outskirts can be mistaken, and it is too hot for turning back or explorations. It is better to ask the little boy coming along the path ahead of me; if he will tell me the way to the railroad I can find the rest for myself.

He is one of those little darkeys who have never had enough to eat, the body is too thin on its small bones, the face is gentle and sad. His eyes are open and sweet, as if he trusted the world, and his voice childish and sweet. I ask him the way to the railroad, as he walks along beside me; and presently, after a few steps farther, he points off to a path on the right, "Das de way to de rayroad, Mister," he says. But as I start off, he calls to me, pointing on ahead in the direction we had been going, "Dis de bes' way dough."

He has a great scar across his throat, and as we walk along I ask who it was cut his neck.

That was where he had the scrofula, and it was so swelled up the doctor said if he didn't cut it out he was going to die. And he cut it out.

"An' a lady from de country told mamma ef she'd kill a toad frog an' fry him in he fat in a tomato can an' put hit on de place, hit would sho cuoh it. And she say put on at night an' ef hit ain't gone in the mawnin she say she ain't in de world."

So his mother fried the frog in the can jes' lak she told her, and sure enough the next morning it was cured.

Stark Young.

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In the Big City

The Golden Rule

A LADY has just come from church, and is walking along a street on the East Side; she is on her way to a hospital to visit a sick friend. As she walks quickly along the street, trying not to seem out of place in this slum, she sees a little crowd moving toward her along the pavement. In the center is an old woman, frowzy, bedraggled and drunk; she is surrounded by young men and boys, jeering, whistling and shoving her.

The lady takes a deep breath, and pushes through the crowd, which makes way for her in surprise. She bends over the swaying, red-faced old woman, and lays her hand gently on her shoulder.

"Can I do anything for you?" she says in a low voice.

The old woman screws one drunken eye up at her, and hiccoughs loudly. With surprising agility she hits the lady crack on the jaw, shouting: "To hell with the English!"

Specialists

Two old darkies, a man and his wife, have come to New York to look for a job. They have lived on a Southern plantation all their lives, and the city and its ways are strange to them. Someone has told them that the best thing to do is to go to an employment agency.

They stand before the desk in the office, and give their names and addresses. The old man is asked what kind of work he is accustomed to.

"Well, suh," he says, "mos'ly I looks foh Massa's specs."

The employment agent stares at him, and then turns to the old woman.

"What can you do?"

"Mos'ly I shoos de flies off Missus."

Efficiency

It is a slack hour in the telephone room at the Pennsylvania Station. The telephone girls, sitting in their stall-like enclosure, are gossiping galvanically, or patting their hair, or staring straight ahead at nothing. An old lady, dressed in countrified clothes, comes timidly through the swinging doors, and stands looking about in bewilderment. Finally she catches sight of the telephone books lying on their long shelves, and goes over to them. After a lengthy search, she approaches the girl at the switchboard, smiling apologetically and clearing her throat. The girl takes her number and says, "Booth 24." The old lady does not know where Booth 24 is, and it has to be pointed out to her.

After some moments, her bonnet cranes out of the booth, and she calls over to the switchboard, "They've given me the wrong number."

"Flash the operator," says the girl.

The old lady disappears again, but only for a moment.

"Flash the operator? What do you mean?"

The girl exchanges a weary wink with the girl next to her.

"Flash the operator."

The little old lady may be from the country, but she will not be imposed on.

"What do you *mean* by 'flash the operator'? Do you mean jiggle this hook up and down?"

The girl stares at her with wooden contempt.

"Sure, that's what I said. Flash the operator."

Religion

It is about three o'clock in the morning, and on this quiet side street all the houses are silent and dark. A taxi draws up to the curb, and two men in evening clothes get out unsteadily, with noisy goodbyes to the people inside. The taxi drives off, and the two men set out up the street arm in arm. They wrangle sketchily, and finally the taller of them succeeds in silencing the other.

"I love m' father 'n I love m' mother 'n I love m' sister 'n I love m' brother. Thass religion."

The other one, getting sleepier every moment, loses most of this, and murmurs, "R'ligion? Whuss r'ligion?"

The tall one, whose mind has already raced far away to other speculations, dismisses the subject with a gesture: "Oh, some kin' 'f graft."

Repartee

It has been a sweltering day, with hardly a breath of air stirring in the factory. Now an altercation has arisen somehow between two of the men—a little old, red-eyed, paunch-bellied man and a near-sighted, pimply young fellow. The men near them leave their machines and gather around the pair in a grinning circle. The two contestants alternately shout sarcasms at each other, and each pretends to leave after every volley, but is always drawn back by the other's shouted retort and the jeering comments of the crowd.

Finally the old fellow gets in the real *coup de grâce*. Fixing his opponent with a baleful glare, he looks at him in silence for several seconds. Then suddenly he says, turning contemptuously on his heel:

"You with the two left feet!"

Chivalry

In the parlor-car of the Broadway Flier, a big, young, shiny-black buck nigger is riding as a passenger. No one is more conscious of the fact than he. He is dressed in a black-and-white check suit, double-breasted, with pigeon's-blood tie, purple shirt, bright orange shoes, white spats, and a light gray derby. While the train is pulling out of the station, he sits quietly in his seat, but after a half-an-hour, he can keep still no longer. He rises and promenades the length of the train, from the club car to the observation car and back again.

As he is passing through a parlor-car, a near-sighted woman, seeing a black man out of the corner of her eye, takes him for the porter, complains nasally of the heat, and asks him to turn on the electric fan. The Negro draws himself up, and takes off his hat with a flourish.

"I'se not your portah, lady," he says, "but I'll ten' to it d'reckly."

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He stalks to the back of the car, and says in a loud voice to the grinning porter, "Mistuh Johnson, the lady yondah requests you should tu'n on them flip-flap flivvers."

Then he walks back to the discomfited lady, makes a low bow, and, in a voice dripping with gallantry, says,

"Comin' up." T. S. MATTHEWS.

Splash!

MR. EARL CARROLL'S "Vanities" have always seemed to me to have a definite character, quite apart from the personalities he exploited in them. At the time when Mr. Ziegfeld was becoming intolerably refined and Mr. Hassard Short was hoisting and dropping chorus and principals by means of hydraulic pressure, Mr. Carroll restored to revue a rowdy clamor, a lot of undressed girls, and a rough humor. In the early revues the jazz bands of the other producers were burlesqued by a Mills Hotel Symphony Orchestra, Joe Cook's contraptions appeared, and an excellent comedienne whose name I've forgotten sang, "Whoa, Pagliacci."

Mr. Carroll's imagination is always exuberant and a little mathematical. He runs to scarlet silks and velvets and seems to think that if forty girls constitute a fine chorus, four hundred make a chorus ten times as good. He likes those dreary set pieces in which girls represent various furs or Greek goddesses or, for all I know, pieces of table silver. The mechanism is always the same: a curtained alcove at the top of a flight of gaudy stairs, two scantily dressed attendants who part the curtains and carry down the twenty-foot train of each appearing figure, whose hands support an enormous and flimsy head-dress. The music for these spectacles is always dull, and it takes each character long minutes to drag across the stage.

None the less, Mr. Carroll has a sense of what to do with his girls and his velvets. In one show he brought his chorus down a runway which started high in the air at one corner of the stage and broke midway, twice turning directly on itself, so that in the perfectly ordered progression of a dance-step you saw people walking in all directions at the same time, a dazzling effect. In the present "Vanities" he does something similar on a single level, and keeps the chorus in a frenzy of shuffling steps, making designs out of legs and almost naked torsos which are definitely exciting. This year the point of nudity seems to be to expose the navel; there is always a trace of a sly wink at the way the girls drop their draperies or are eclipsed in sudden darkness a moment too soon—or too late. The display of nakedness is not entirely frank. I hardly know how it could be, in the present state of censorship, but I think Mr. Carroll gives the impression that he prefers a touch of lubricity.

There is an enormous amount of rah-rah-ing and collegiate interest in the show, and the presumption must be that college boys will like that and will like the great number of dull scenes. Two numbers alone show Mr. Carroll's real stage talent. One is at the end of the first act, where he lowers a mechanical contraption which shoots out showers of sparks such as you see falling from the tops of girders when they are being tortured with the oxyacetylene torch; that again has physical excitement. The other is a vision of Robots in a mechanical dance in which the characters are dressed in metallic tubes, repeating their movements in an infinite circle on a series of platforms at the top of which an amazing young woman turns slow cartwheels until she begins to look like the three-legged symbol of the Isle of Man, and ending with a lock-step which must have been designed to recall to the audience Mr. Carroll's incarceration at Atlanta.

My program fails to refresh my memory about any of the other scenes in which the producer's ingenuity showed itself. The new "Vanities," therefore, falls below its predecessors, in spite of having comedians of the first order. Even with them it remains an elaborated vaudeville, whereas good revue manages to create a tone of its own.

For me no evening is entirely vain in which Frisco does any one of those acts which he himself says are "damn clever, but awfully silly," breaking into his old "Darktown Strutters' Ball" at the end to show again that he was a decade ahead of his time as a dancer when he began and is still as interesting as any of them. As a comedian, Frisco has an oblique attitude toward life, a genuine naïveté, a disarming friendliness, and an irrepressible impulse to kid himself, to explain his little jokes before he utters them, to assure you that when he plays two characters the change in make-up effected by transferring his moustache to his chin is "not such a vast change after all." I have the satisfaction of knowing that in him I see an original.

Fields is, on the contrary, a highly sophisticated artist, putting over a definite character with endless attention to detail. A long experience in dumb-show (in the famous billiard and golf games at the "Follies") has made him a master of pantomime; his voice, discovered in "Poppy," has a querulous exasperated note which goes perfectly with the character he is always playing—that of a man driven mad by the wilful and obstinate malevolence of things and people. In one scene (which I suppose is a burlesque of Willard Mack's play of the Canadian Mounted) he goes to the door of the hut about a dozen times, opens it, and says, "It's no fit night for man or beast," receiving each time a dash of snow in his face and shaking it off with complete incomprehension of the evil ways of nature. In another scene he is a dentist and asks a patient to take off her hat; she does so and another, skull-fitting, hat is revealed underneath. Fields merely looks at his assistant, a venomous concentration of his hatred for all the ways of womankind and of his bewilderment that such human beings should be allowed to infest the earth. Everything worries and baffles Fields in his favorite character, and he is much too sensitive to take things ironically. He suffers. But when things go right he is bland and fatuous, as petulant people are likely to be.

With less entertaining stars, the new "Vanities" would be simply a bore, and the reason is that, trusting to stars or to a large and handsome chorus, Mr. Carroll has neglected some of the essential elements of musical shows. For one thing, music; the tunes are imitative, the orchestration thumping. Another thing is the scenery. It is all very well to differ from other producers by using cloth and drapes and tassels, but these must be at least as satis-

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fying to the eye as half a dozen Urban drops. And finally, voices, especially for the necessary evil of prima donna and tenor. A good revue remains a mingling of harmonious elements; if any one is left out, everything else is out of proportion and misses a little. GILBERT SELDES.

CORRESPONDENCE

A False Issue

SIR: In a recent New Republic editorial the statement was made that modification of the Volstead Act was an issue in which the American people, both those for and against, were "morbidly interested." The Volstead Act is merely an act of Congress providing the machinery to enforce the prohibition article of the Constitution. It performs exactly the same function, and no other, as the acts enforcing the Thirteenth and Nineteenth articles. The proposition that some Negroes could be constitutionally enslaved or some women constitutionally deprived of the right to vote because of their sex by a mere amendment of the enforcement acts by Congress, would be recognized as ridiculous by every intelligent person. The proposition that intoxicating liquor of any sort can be constitutionally permitted by a modification of the Volstead Act is equally ridiculous. Walter Lippmann, a militant wet who refuses to sacrifice his intellectual honesty even in discussing the prohibition controversy, frankly admits it in his Harper's article. "There is no slightest doubt that the amendment was intended," he says, "to prohibit the lightest beer and the lightest wine no less than gin and absinthe." He goes on to say that "no candid man can deny that the object of the movement against the Eighteenth Amendment is to nullify the intent of the authors . . . in those states where a majority desires it [intoxicating liquor]."

The fact that prohibition is the settled policy of a majority of the states, Lippmann points out, makes repeal impossible. The practical alternatives are enforcement or nullification. It would hasten the solution of the prohibition controversy to make this clear to the people. Pretending that it is not prohibition, but the Volstead Act, which has caused the agitation confuses the issue and postpones a decision. CHARLES S. ALLEN.

San Jose, Calif.

[The New Republic agrees with Mr. Lippmann that the practical alternatives with respect to prohibition are enforcement or nullification, and it has said so repeatedly. The anti-prohibitionists do their best to give reality to the alternative by ignoring the law and nullifying it in their personal habits, but the prohibitionists will not take up the challenge. They refuse to propose the manufacture of a really adequate machinery for enforcement of the law by the federal government within the jurisdiction of anti-prohibitionist states. But if the Amendment is not to be enforced, and if it cannot be repealed, it would be merely a recognition of existing facts to seek to modify the Volstead Act by dropping any attempt at enforcement within the jurisdiction of those states which declare themselves expressly to be opposed to the law.—THE EDITORS.]

More Hell and Less Corn

SIR: In 1896, William Allen White advised the farmers to raise more corn and less hell. Mark Hanna seized upon his words and used them to seat industry firmly upon the farmers' backs. Since then we have had an overproduction of corn. The advertisement White received from Hanna helped him to make a fortune, but not in corn.

The meat packers of Kansas City used to keep a pet steer to lead the other steers down the chute to the slaughter pen. After the victims had been led to the slaughter the pet steer was taken out and fed, so as to be ready for the next time. White and other Middle-Western leaders play a similar role.

What Kansas really needs is to raise more hell and less corn.

Oakland, Calif. ARTHUR BENTON MAVITY.

A Sacco-Vanzetti Memorial Meeting

SIR: In your issue of August 15 you published a letter from me stating that a Sacco-Vanzetti memorial meeting would be held at Steinert Hall, Boston, on August 22 at 8.30 P. M. Permission to use Steinert Hall having been withdrawn, and all other halls, including Faneuil Hall and the Old South Meeting House, having been refused us, this meeting will be held at the Scenic Auditorium, 12 Berkley Street, Boston, on August 23, at 8:30 P. M.

A committee of citizens, including Professor Samuel Eliot Morison of Harvard, Dr. Alice Hamilton of the Harvard Medical School, Mrs. Gertrude L. Winslow, Miss Catherine Huntington, Creighton Hill and myself, is sponsoring the meeting. The list of speakers includes Edna St. Vincent Millay, Arthur Davison Ficke, Dr. Alexander Meiklejohn, Robert Morss Lovett and the Rev. Harold L. Stratton. GARDNER JACKSON.

Boston, Mass.

Women in Politics

SIR: The middle-aged woman of family, wealth and leisure has long been the social arbiter of America. Has she become now the political manager? In these parts, nine out of ten of such women, irrespective of former political allegiance, appear to be for Herbert Hoover. On the farms and in the cities, the social scene is the same. These women are against Smith. Among the young women, the case is otherwise. A sharp line of cleavage appears with the majority against Hoover and for Smith.

Religion has nothing to do with this, and Tammany Hall has but little. "Wet-or-dry" does not solve the problem. In the course of the Wilson administrations, these older women slowly but positively turned against him. In 1920, they voted for Harding. The social woman-mind has never yet digested the record of his administration. It has been Coolidge-ward since 1923. . . .

If the women are to cast one-third of the vote, and their vote is to be at least, all ages counted, seven in ten for Hoover, the men will have to go for Smith by a great majority if he is to carry these states of the Ohio valley.

Norwood, O. WILLIAM E. CHANCELLOR.

Henry James, Sr.

SIR: If asked to define the greatest mystic, the most original theologian, of America of the last century, one could not do better than to use Mr. Waldo Frank's words, "He was conscious of the Whole, he lived in terms of the Whole, in the way of the mystic and the Man." Little known in his own day, he is quite unknown today if such an undaunted and athletic explorer of our past as Mr. Frank has failed to rediscover him. But nevertheless Henry James, the father of Henry the novelist, of William the philosopher, was a mystic of profounder mind than Emerson an accepter of his fellow men with deeper understanding than Whitman, as fearless a scorner of the smug and conventional a Thoreau, and a more conscious plotter of an America that was no echo of an old rhapsody, but a New World indeed, than Poe ever dreamed of. He expressed himself in a style of vibrant and upbearing rhythm that puts him in the great tradition of English prose, and yet he never will be read by many, any more than Spinoza is read by many, though no serious scholar can afford to pass him by. Some day his passionate sense of the Whole, his faith in America as a New World without Church or State in the European tradition, his whole-hearted democracy of the spirit, will enter into our common thought, along with the discoveries of other outstanding prophets and seers of the past. Though his robust and abounding faith is in absolute antithesis to the assured infidelity of today, an astounding paradox at the heart of his philosophy embraces the extremest unfaith confronting it. For his Creator's supreme triumph is in the endowment of the creature with such proud and sufficient selfhood that he may absolutely deny his maker, and search the universe in vain to find a God. . . .

S. MARSHALL ILSLEY.

Santa Barbara, Calif.

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The Russian Stereotype

American Policy toward Russia Since 1917, by Frederick Lewis Schuman. New York: International Publishers. 399 pages. $3.75.

THE policy of the United States in the years of its first serious engagement in world affairs exhibits a series of anomalies which are a source of amusement or embarrassment to the historian, depending on whether his attitude is cynical or apologetic. Dr. Schuman's attitude is neither. Although American policy toward Russia represents the most extraordinary combination of wavering contradiction and obstinate inconsistency that the modern world affords, Dr. Schuman tells the story unflinchingly and impartially. With his facts there is little opportunity to quarrel. Every important assertion in his book is carried back in the notes to the best authority available, and the bibliography is very remarkably complete. As a piece of workmanship the book is a model. The work will not have to be done again.

After a brief résumé of the relations between the United States and Tsarist Russia which gave rise to a potent legend of national friendship, Dr. Schuman begins his closely spun narrative with the almost simultaneous events, the Russian revolution of 1917 and the entrance of America into the War. Undoubtedly the former was of immense value to the propaganda for a war to end war and to make the world safe for democracy to which the United States responded so whole-heartedly. The Bolshevist Revolution of November and the determination of the Soviet government to force a peace by negotiation caused a rapid chilling of the early enthusiasm. Even then, however, President Wilson used language of the deepest sympathy toward Russia. He laid the blame for her defection upon the failure of the Allies to make clear their essential principle: "that the War shall not end in vindictive action of any kind; that no nation or people shall be robbed or punished because the irresponsible rulers of a single country have themselves done deep and abominable wrong," etc. On January 8, 1918, he made Article VI of his Fourteen Points a promise to Russia of "the freest coöperation of the other nations of the world in obtaining for her an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of her own political development and national policy," and an assurance "of a sincere welcome into the society of free nations *under institutions of her own choosing*" [italics mine].

Dr. Schuman continues his carefully studied and documented account of the confused events which followed, with Francis and Robins in Russia and the pseudo-Ambassador Bakhmeteff at Washington playing their respective parts. The United States combated the idea of intervention as a solution for the Russian problem, but in the summer of 1918 the Czech forces in Siberia, who had earlier gone over to the Allies to make a bid for the independence of their native land, received encouragement from American representatives to take possession of the trans-Siberian railway and constitute a line of defense against the extension of the Soviet government to the East. Here Dr. Schuman makes one of his rare statements of opinion. "He [Ambassador Francis] was little concerned if the Czechs concluded that the United States was prepared to send an army to the Urals to assist them. His purpose was to provoke intervention by whatever means seemed most expedient."

Intervention there was. In the same paper in which Mr. Polk, Acting Secretary of State, reiterated the view that intervention was unwise, he proposed to the Allies to send joint expeditions to penetrate Russia by way of Vladivostok and Archangel. Dr. Schuman is probably correct in his view that this *démarche* was undertaken in the fear that intervention would take place in any case, and in the hope that, by leading it, the United States would be able to control the movement and incidentally maintain the solidarity of the Allies. The decision once taken, the American government participated to the full in hostile measures against the Soviets. It used the Red Cross to send munitions and supplies to the counter-revolutionary armies of Kolchak, Denikin, Yudenitch and Wrangel. It sent detachments of men drafted to fight Germany to the Murmansk coast and Siberia. The former contingent, under British command, suffered humiliating defeat and mutiny, and was withdrawn with the loss of 244 killed and 305 wounded. The latter was involved in constant difficulties with the irregular forces of Semenoff and with the Japanese. In defiance of the understanding that the nations should participate equally in the intervention, the Japanese sent 70,000 troops to the American 14,000. The opposition between the American and the Japanese aims in their joint campaign became obvious, and it would appear that only by a hair's breadth was an open clash between their forces averted.

Meanwhile the propaganda of the press and patrioteering societies in the United States was turned against Soviet Russia with a fury surpassing even the war-time outburst of hate against Germany. The Sisson documents and the monstrous yarn of the nationalization of women were eagerly gulped down. One last attempt President Wilson made to enforce his acid test of "the good will of her sister nations toward Russia" in the proposal for a conference of all Russian parties at the Prinkipo Islands, but when this plan fell through he desisted. While the other Allies, after the breakdown of intervention, blockade and the *cordon sanitaire*, by various routes arrived at a *modus vivendi* with Russia, the United States remained obdurate. The final pronouncement of the Wilson administration was Secretary Colby's letter to the Italian Ambassador in which he declared that "it is not possible for the government of the United States to recognize the present rulers of Russia" because "the existing regime in Russia is based upon the negation of every principle of honor and good faith and every usage and convention underlying the whole structure of international law." This sweeping conclusion so utterly at variance with previous declarations is easily explainable by the well known Wilson psychology. It is parallel to his change of attitude in regard to the Germans. Defeated in his attempt to carry out the policy of the Fourteen Points as affirmed in the pre-Armistice agreement, and weary of the struggle, Wilson became the champion of the most violent measures of the Treaty of Versailles. Similarly in the case of Russia his rancor against those who were the unhappy occasion of his confusion was embittered by a guilty conscience. One remembers the story of Charles IX who cried, after being persuaded to order the massacre of the Huguenots, "Kill them all. Let none live to reproach me."

Dr. Schuman's final chapters are devoted to the rest of the story—the Russian famine with the extraordinary efforts at relief which it called forth in the United States, the gradual increase of Russian trade in spite of official discouragement, and the inevitable subsidence of the passions of war. In spite of all that has happened in the last eight years, Mr. Colby's note remains in effect the

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last word of the American government to Russia. Non-recognition has become part of the stereotype of American political thought, like the refusal to join the League or to write off the Allied debts. Mr. Kellogg's recent failure to invite the Soviet government to sign with other nations the treaty renouncing war is an application of it.

If we analyze Mr. Colby's indictment we find two counts: first, the repudiation of the Russian national debt and the confiscation by the Communist regime of the property of American citizens. Dr. Schuman estimates the total of these claims at $658,000,000, not an impossible sum. Against this the Soviet government asks repayment for damage inflicted by the American armies, and their associates, Messrs. Kolchak, Denikin, Yudenitch and Wrangel. The Soviet government has repeatedly sought to bring these conflicting claims to negotiation. The position of the United States was formulated by Mr. Hughes in 1923: "There would seem to be at this time no reason for negotiations. . . . If the Soviet authorities are ready to restore the confiscated property of American citizens or make effective compensation they can do so," etc., etc. To this it is sufficient to observe that governments are the proper intermediaries for their citizens in such matters. If Great Britain had desired on her own account to make compensation to American victims of the Alabama raids, she would have been obliged to ask for the good offices of the United States government; and if the United States desired to compensate the German holders of patents and other private property confiscated during the War, it would have to deal through the German government.

The other count of the indictment is the connection of the Soviet government with the Red International, and its propaganda of world revolution. As to this, the present effect of such propaganda is negligible. It is inconvenient chiefly to the trade unions, and doubtless accounts for the hostility of the A. F. of L. to the recognition of Russia. In the last analysis the question is one of expediency. If the Russian economic system is wrong, because it reduces the country to "an economic vacuum," as Mr. Hughes and Mr. Hoover assert, then in fulfillment of that inveterate desire to be of service to the Russian people which is professed in every American official utterance on the subject *ad nauseam,* we may assist our friends to find out their mistake by passive ostracism, since we can no longer use a more active pedagogy. If, on the contrary, the Russian economic experiment holds ultimate promise of dangerous rivalry to the capitalistic system, and the only relation conceivable of communism to capitalism is that of war, it may be the part of wisdom to refuse peace or truce. That this is the ultimate reason of the American official policy, as it has slowly revealed itself through a mass of hypocritical verbiage, Dr. Schuman's forthright narrative and penetrating analysis make perfectly clear. And in recognition of his service it is only fair to quote his final words, which express the spirit in which his book is written.

> To those who regard such a combat as desirable or unavoidable, that policy must seem to be a product of enlightened statesmanship, regardless of all the arguments that have been advanced against it. But to those who see only disaster in such a prospect, who would strive to avert it at all costs, who are willing to accept certain hypothetical risks and difficulties for the sake of restored peace and friendship and to abandon past formulæ in order to deal more constructively with present realities, the American policy toward Russia must appear worse than futility.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Marc Lescarbot

Nova Francia: A Description of Acadia, 1606. Translated by P. Erondelle, 1609. The Broadway Travellers. Harper and Brothers. 346 pages. $4.

MARC LESCARBOT was a Frenchman, a wit, something of a poet, and a scholar devoted to the homely wisdom of Montaigne. He was a barrister also: and his philosophy did not save him from a temporary embitterment when he suffered an injustice in the Paris courts. When his chief client, Jean de Biencourt, Seigneur de Poutrincourt, invited him on a voyage to visit the French territories in America, he accepted and spent the year 1606-7 in Port Royal. His description of Acadia was published in 1609, and immediately translated into English.

Lescarbot had the delightfully excursive and literary mind of his time, a correct code of morals, and a civilized heart. Everything he saw on his travels reminded him of something he had read, which in turn reminded him of something else he had read, and so he made a trip around the world, and back into ancient times, by way of history, mythology and poetry, arriving at Acadia and the Indian customs by a thousand roads. He looked about him, and set down a substantial account of what he saw: then searched his prodigious memory for contrast and comparison among the Gauls and the Picts, the ancient Hebrews, the Persians, the Egyptians, the Romans and even the modern French.

As a poet, he delighted in the strange ceremonies, the form and beauty of savage life. As a moralist, he condemned in them only the vices he condemned in all men, and praised them for whatever virtues are the common property of good souls. As a Roman Catholic, he wished to bring the poor savage into the ample fold of the true Faith: and as a practical man and a loyal Frenchman he could not help seeing that his distinguished friend Poutrincourt was doing a great work in helping to build up a stout French government in this territory that lay dangerously adjacent to lands already claimed by the English and the Dutch.

Today his book is valuable for permanent things: for style, for historical truth, for charming wit and leisurely learning. When it was first published, Richard Hakluyt observed that it was not only a fascinating travel book, but an excellent political argument. At his request, Pierre Erondelle, a Huguenot—possibly a refugee—then living in London, translated that part of the book here reprinted, and dedicated it to the Bright Star of the North, Prince Henry of Britain.

Erondelle called the Prince's attention to the fact that Lescarbot had dedicated his book to a King, two Queens and the Dauphin: politically, this had a sinister significance, and the translator urged upon His Highness the need for immediate activity in colonizing Virginia. Plainly, the French were at work in Acadia, and the settling of the adjacent territories for England must proceed without delay, or those rich resources would go to waste, England would continue to be pestered by overmuch people living in misery, and, above all, the poor savages would be exposed to the dangers of a false religion.

The charming and adroit book of M. Lescarbot was translated and published at once, therefore, not so much as good reading matter, but as a warning to the English that Virginia was too sparsely settled and too near the thriving French posts for English comfort. Their enjoy-

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ment of M. Lescarbot's urbane style must have been marred considerably by the dire propaganda they could discern between the lines.

The fashionable anxiety, of French and English alike, to carry the gospel to the American savages, had the wholesome effect of stimulating emigration from both countries. Lescarbot addressed a benevolent message to the future generations of Indians. They would all be happily civilized in time, and he hoped they would read his book and "bless them that have employed themselves in their conversion, and reformation of their incivility."

KATHERINE ANNE PORTER.

Reductio ad Absurdum

The Racial Elements of European History, by Hans F. K. Günther. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 414 pages. $4.60.

> The Nordic ideal in Germany . . . would seem . . . not to have found the same diffusion which it has had in North America. In the United States the books of Grant and Stoddard have had a remarkable success. . . . The highly developed eugenic research, which in North America has become something like a patriotic preoccupation, gave Grant's and Stoddard's works a sure scientific foundation. . . .
>
> The peril of denordization has been recognized by many Americans since Grant's book appeared. Associations have been formed among the Nordic and predominantly Nordic Americans of Anglo-Saxon descent, such as "The Nordic Guard" and among Americans of German descent ("The Nordic Aryan Federation" and so on). Some of the Nordic-minded North Americans seems to have joined together in co-operative unions, so as to make themselves gradually economically independent of big capital in non-Nordic hands.

WHEN the flow of pronouncements concerning the Nordic began to reach us from the pens of Mr. Stoddard, Mr. Grant, and their associates, many persons manifested something of annoyance. For, they felt, here was a group of men who, utilizing the fruits of serious scientific work, twisted the meaning of this work—in many instances interpreting tentative results as final—in order to make their case. As time passed, however, the feeling of annoyance gave way to mild amusement, for it soon became apparent that the Nordicists, if allowed their own head for a sufficient time, would give themselves the *coup de grâce*.

With the translation of Günther's book, that time can be said to have arrived. The author is one of the outstanding contributors to the Nordic doctrine, which flourishes in Germany now as it has, under a slightly different name, since the days of Houston Stewart Chamberlin and Count Gobineau. His book is an amazing exhibition of the manner in which the human mind can associate unrelated facts so as to make a superficially logical whole. It is the *reductio ad absurdum* of the Nordic doctrine.

The work opens with a discussion of the racial types to be found in Europe. The author recognizes five: the Nordic, the Mediterranean, the Dinaric, the Alpine, and the East Baltic. There are photographs, of course, but their value scientifically, I fear, is highly questionable. For it is not difficult, having fixed a "type" in one's mind, to obtain photographs of persons from almost any population who fit into that type. Racial character readings which Dr. Günther has made are well worth quoting. Thus: "Nordic eyes have something shining, something radiant about them. Their expression can grow hard, and generally has something decided about it, but a kindly though always decided expression is not seldom to be seen." On the other hand, the "expression of the eyes" of the Alpine "is dull, incommunicative, or even sullen, at any rate without joyousness," while the expression of those of the East Baltic people, though "often sullen, [and] not seldom . . . gloomy," is "withal stronger or at least harder than in the Alpine race."

The chapter which discusses the mental characteristics of the European races presents nothing so new. Thus it has long been known that "judgment, truthfulness and energy" are "the qualities which are always found marking out Nordic man," while the Alpine is "reflective, hard-working, and narrow-minded." Yet, although such statements have been made before, the devising of an East Baltic race (which includes the Russians), gives this Nordic scholar a fuller play for the results of his methodology. For example:

> To the foreigner the men of the East Baltic race seem at first to be reserved, moody beings, heavy and slow, mistrustful and silent . . . [Yet] he changes to a confused, rambling dreamer, weaving endless tales, and full of plans; he becomes a visionary. . . . He inclines to brutality in sexual relations, and, indeed, to brutality in general . . . "Nihilism" lies deep in the East Baltic soul . . . [the race] has little cleanliness, whether personal or in the home.

This is not the complete quotation of Günther's remarks on the mental traits of this race. They cover two pages. But this is, I think, a fair sample. The interested reader who wants more will find what he is seeking on pages sixty-two and sixty-three. Gorky, one is interested to note, belongs to the East Baltic grouping.

There is an extended discussion of the role of the Nordic in history. Here, too, there is little new for the follower of the publications of the Nordicists. The Nordics, we are again told, were responsible for the rise of Assyria, of Greece, of Crete. They were the Persians of the time of the "lofty ideals" of Zarathustra—at any rate, they furnished the nobility. For Nordics are always nobles, though in modern times we find that "the portion of the more Nordic element in all open-air callings, particularly among coachmen, is striking." So we are taken to the present, nor does Günther's history neglect the United States. "The racial position of the United States is no less terrifying than Germany's or England's." For, according to the figures that are adduced, "the North American people are threatened with degeneration and denordization." Nordics, always comprising the upper class, do not reproduce as fast as the less desirable breeds. They go to war and are killed off in greater number than other strains—thus, "the French anthropologist Lapouge emphasizes the Nordic look he observed on the arrival of American troops . . . [since] service was voluntary" in the United States!

I do not think it is necessary to quote further to make the point. The Nordic movement is not science, it is religion. If you are a believer, you will rationalize the facts at hand in such a way as to fit them in with your beliefs. If you are not a believer, you will see that the so-called intellectual structure of Nordicism is a smattering of poor psychology and genetics, and poorer anthro-

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pology, plus a liberal addition of wish-fulfillment. Certainly it is not something to be argued as being on the same plane as scientific treatment of data.

And nothing can make this clearer than a reading of this translation of Günther's book.

MELVILLE J. HERSKOVITS.

Books on Art

Flemish Art: A Critical Survey, by Roger Fry. New York: Brentano's. 56 pages. $3.50.

Old Masters and Modern Art: France and England, by Sir Charles Holmes. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 314 pages. $7.50.

Art Studies: Medieval Renaissance and Modern. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 156 pages. $7.50.

IN the difficult realm of art criticism, Roger Fry has managed to establish a golden mean. He never approaches painting from a literary standpoint, but always, and with shrewd discrimination, evaluates it on the basis of its proper esthetic qualities. At the same time, his ideas are so lucid and his style so admirable that he can hold the attention of the ordinary layman better, perhaps, than any contemporary critic.

"Flemish Art" will hardly rank with Mr. Fry's more important books, since it consists, merely, of a lecture delivered in connection with an exhibition which was held at Burlington House during the winter of 1926-7. Despite its brevity, however, it is an illuminating *résumé* of an important field of painting. Mr. Fry does full justice to the genius of Flemish art, to its amazing craftsmanship, to the richness of its color and the precision of its detail; yet he does not hesitate to add that consummate painting, less concerned with the minutiæ of everyday life, has a breadth and nobility of vision that Flanders never attained. His analysis of the individual artists, from the Van Eycks to Rubens, is brilliant and highly specific. After reading Mr. Fry's book, one is likely to look at their works with a more intelligent eye.

Sir Charles Holmes, with the present volume, has completed his trilogy of books on the various schools of art as represented in the National Gallery, of which he is Director. As a critic he is no match for Mr. Fry, and yet his survey of French and English art is unusually interesting on account of the ideas which it contains. He believes that racial inheritance conditions painting very greatly, and he draws a sharp distinction between the French instinct for proportion, form, abstract relations, and the English love for the familiar beauties of nature which, coupled with a lack of ordered discipline, is apt to lead toward the photographic in art.

It is evident that Sir Charles resents very bitterly, as do many painters in America, the present domination of the art world by France. He suggests that imitation of the post-impressionists may result in the same sterility which overtook the French and Flemish painters who attempted to borrow the methods of Italian art. With scrupulous fairness, however, he admits the value of the modern emphasis on form and purely esthetic relations. He contends, merely, that psychological content cannot safely be ignored, especially by English artists, to whose temper it is native. Finally, he does not allow his personal philosophy to bias his account of the two schools of art, which is thorough and sound, if not notably original.

In contrast to the books by Mr. Fry and Sir Charles Holmes, "Art Studies" has little to offer the general reader. The fifth of a series of volumes edited by the art faculties of Harvard and Princeton Universities, it is even more technical in character than the publications of previous years. Its scholarly tone is emphasized by the fact that this year, for the first time, articles by foreign contributors have not been translated into English, but are published in the original French or Italian. It represents, chiefly, the fruits of minute, painstaking research in the fields of architecture and iconography, and, though one respects such achievements, it seems regrettable that it contains no articles of general critical interest such as have been included in other volumes.

EDITH H. WALTON.

An Ancient Heritage

Men Are Like That, by Leonard Ramsden Hartill. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 305 pages. $3.

ENOUGH to say that men became beasts. But then there is a brighter side, for in such a pass there are men and women who become saints. . . beasts and saints. Men are like that."

Ohanus Appressian is an Armenian of the Caucasus. His experiences give him a right to offer judgment on the heights and depths of which mankind is capable. Ohanus came to work for Mr. Hartill, author of this strange, dreadful book, at an American agricultural relief station. This is his story, set down by the American who became interested in him, in the laconic terms of a man who has seen and felt so much that nothing seems worthy of emphasis.

Some relief from horror is given by glimpses of Armenian village life, of the serene beauty of the country of Ararat, and of the heroism of friends. There are brief notes also on the civilization of the early Middle Ages, when Armenia was possibly the most advanced of any Christian nation in the world, leading the way in the East until the rich capital at Ani fell a prize to the Suljuk Turks. An obstinate loyalty to Christianity is the crime by which the Moslem invaders have justified destruction a thousand years ago and persecution ever since.

The Armenian learned to the end the lesson of hate against the oppressors of his people, but he does not rail against them. He says, in Mr. Hartill's words: "Russian troops did terrible things in the Turkish villages. The world knows the fate of the Armenians in Turkey. We Armenians did not spare the Tartars. It is all a circle of hatred and revenge, an endless chain plunging ever farther into the depths and bringing forth the worst there is in human nature. If persisted in, the slaughtering of prisoners, the looting, and the rape and massacre of the helpless become commonplace actions expected and accepted as a matter of course. Men are like that. We Armenians, brutalized by the horrors we had endured and inflicted in our war with the Turks, were to be no more merciful toward one another in the civil war that was soon to come."

Over and over again, Ohanus was on the brink of death. His sufferings, his griefs, and his escapes are incredible—unless one knows the truth of what Mr. Hartill says in his foreword, that after the eight years of hell in the Caucasus no man was living except by a miracle.

What lifts this single refugee from the pitiable, inert mass of victims is that his mind did not become numbed and powerless. He persisted stubbornly in thinking. He offers quietly the philosophy that his experiences brought

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him. Hate begets hate. As long as men try to even up the scores of revenge there will be no hope for any of them, even the strongest, ever to find peace.

LYMAN BRYSON.

Recent Fiction

The Dark Princess, by W. E. B. DuBois. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 311 pages. $2.

IN "The Dark Princess," Mr. DuBois has achieved the queerest sort of mixture: clear sharp observation, thoughtfully considered and carefully written, helter-skelter with Graustarkian romance, the easy luxury of rubies almost as large as fists and quite as brilliant as the eyes of the Princess who finally weds the Young American. It is only a detail that in this case the Young American is a Negro rather than an Anglo-Saxon. And yet those portions of the book that deal with the fluctuating fortunes of the protagonist, his rejection from medical school on the ground of color and the bitterness which drove him from America; the deep-seated idealism which drove him back to be a laborer, and the thwarting of that idealism, are as sane, as accurate and as lacking in bombast as one could well desire. Mr. DuBois' story, aside from this, deals with a concerted rebellion on the part of the world's dark races against the world's light races, united only in their consciousness of a superiority that emanates as a sort of halo about any skin pigmented on this side of Mongolian. I fancy that this is at once a warning and a call to the colors. It is worth noting that this author is one of the few who can write about minority and "queer" races as if they were men rather than types. He is conscious of the individual as the individual is of himself. He does not, as Mr. Ludwig Lewisohn does, find it necessary to make his own experience intimately constrain a group whose unity rests more or less lightly in a name. His people are real people. If they are occasionally silly and improbable, they are never mere personified debates. M. P. L.

The Tree of Knowledge, by Pío Baroja. Translated from the Spanish by Aubrey F. G. Bell. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $3.

"THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE" of Good and Evil bears bitter fruit in this novel. Andrés Hurtado could have been either a good doctor or a good philosopher. His attempt to combine the two callings is not successful. In lower than middle-class surroundings, we watch this young man progress from disillusion to dissolution. His final act of suicide will have but little interest for most American readers. Hurtado was never able to make articulate his hatred of the barbarity of Spain at the end of the last century, the priests and the politicians, the bull fights and the houses of prostitution. As a "sanitary doctor" for the government, his connection with the wages of sin toward the end of his short life was close. Just why a young man of his ideals and his sensibility should have accepted such a post is hard to understand. The terse descriptions of student life in Madrid and small-town existence in the provinces are probably the best things in the book. Certain clinical portions may revolt those with weak stomachs, and probably only specialists will enjoy twenty-four pages of philosophical dialogue which come directly in the middle of the book. The author seems to write with unusual sincerity and integrity. For this reason his work is decidedly above the average.

C. A. C.

Daughters of India, by Margaret Wilson. New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.

ALTHOUGH the author of the Harper Prize Novel for 1923 announces that the characters (and the almost non-existent incidents in this book) are "purely imaginary," it can only by courtesy claim the title of fiction. It is, however, a genuine contribution to literature about India—this time from the point of view of the American missionary, and, while it does not compare in social or dramatic interest with "A Passage to India" or Miss Mayo's literary bombshell, it presents the subject-matter with vigorous descriptive art and considerable psychological insight and humorous sense. There is a leisurely narrative concerning two missionaries and their associates, which progresses to a plausible climax (scrupulously devoid of "heart interest"), and there is novelty amounting to daring literary innovation in the presentation of missionaries as decent and courageous human beings, and of the problems and ordeals which confront such practical idealists in the pursuance of their vocation. Miss Wilson persuades the reader that the situation of the social pioneer is an actual occasion for heroism—a heroism completely overlooked by a public unused to reading missionary reports. From the angle of the reviewer of fiction, it is only unfortunate that a persistently recurrent thought should be: "If only all missionary reports were as lively and dramatic as this!"

D. B. W.

A Correction

Brigadier-General S. E. Tillman has called our attention to the fact that Mr. C. A. Chapman's objection, in a review of Dr. C. Hart Merriam's "An-nik-a-del," that Dr. Merriam has erroneously described the action of tornadoes in causing roofs to fly off houses and their walls to explode as due to "the irrepressible power of compressed air," is the result of a misunderstanding of Dr. Merriam's meaning. From the point of view of the partial vacuum created in the heart of the tornado, the air in the houses is compressed and so causes the explosion of the houses.

Contributors

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY is the author of "The Harp Weaver and Other Poems" and, with Deems Taylor, of the opera, "The King's Henchman." Harper and Brothers are soon to publish another volume of Miss Millay's poems entitled "The Buck in the Snow."

BARTLETT CORMACK is the author of "The Racket," one of last season's Broadway successes.

PAUL BLANSHARD, Field Secretary of the League for Industrial Democracy, is the author of a New Republic pamphlet, "Labor in Southern Cotton Mills."

DOROTHEA MATTHEWS is a student at Oxford University.

KATHERINE ANNE PORTER is a reviewer for the New York Herald Tribune, the New York Times, and various other periodicals.

MELVILLE J. HERSKOVITS, assistant professor of Anthropology at Northwestern University, is the author of numerous scientific papers.

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LYMAN BRYSON lectures on international relations for the extension division of the University of California.

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